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**John Stuart Duncan M.A. (Cantab.), B.Sc. (Open)**

**The Royal Burgh of Peebles in the Nineteenth Century:  
the impact of a locally-organised railway  
on a moribund Scottish county town.**

**Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the  
Discipline of the History of Science, Technology and Medicine.  
The Open University.**

**Date of Submission: 1 March 2005**

Number No. R0009634  
Submission date: 23 February 2005  
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## **ERRATA**

Page iv Appendix 7. Should read page **'349'**

Appendix 8. Should read page **'355'**

Page 164, para. 2, line 5. Should read **'with only one more,'**

Page 277, para.2, line 2. For **'Lord Brougham's'** read **'Lord Cockburn's'**.

Page 350, para 2. The first sentence should read:-

**'Table 9-1 (p.148) lists some of the excursions that arrived from Edinburgh during the holiday seasons of 1861 and 1864, and three of these were very large.**

Page 351, para. **'Events of the day'** The second sentence should read:-

**'By August 1864, the Peebles Railway had been leased to the North British Railway (NBR) for over three years, and since this was the third excursion to Peebles with more than a thousand people, it was not a new problem for the staff in the NBR traffic department.'**

1

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## ABSTRACT

Peebles, a small burgh in the Scottish Borders, was stagnant at the start of the 1800s, having remained virtually unchanged for 200 years. It was by-passed during the 1840s railway boom, the North British Railway (NBR) having decided that building a railway from Edinburgh to Peebles would be too costly. Local people then planned, built and ran the successful Peebles Railway, opened in 1855 as a 19-mile branch line linked to the NBR Edinburgh-Hawick route. It was an early example of the 'Cheap Railway Movement' in Britain.

Within months, the town's corn market had reopened, and the first of four woollen mills had begun production. The NBR and the Caledonian Railway soon provided additional rail links, and, as Peebles was no longer isolated, tourism blossomed because of the town's situation in beautiful countryside that had associations with Sir Walter Scott. The local Burgh and Grammar Schools were rebuilt, and low freight charges for building materials meant that the appearance of Peebles changed. New houses used sandstone instead of the local whinstone, and Welsh slates instead of thatch. A palatial Hydropathic was opened in 1881, which encouraged the 'carriage' trade. The Parish Church became too small for the growing population, and was rebuilt in 1887, using expensive materials—an expression of the renewed confidence in the town.

This thesis explores why Peebles was stagnant in the first part of the nineteenth century. It reviews previous attempts to obtain a railway and the efforts of the Town Council to attract industry. The contribution of the Peebles Railway to the town and district is compared with those of a number of similar branch lines in Scotland and northern England. Much of the undoubted rejuvenation of the town is shown to be due to the three progenitors of the Peebles Railway Company, who were prominent members of the community.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In the research leading to this thesis, I have been helped by a large number of people and organisations. First of all, to my Supervisors in the Department of the History of Science, Technology and Medicine at the Open University, Dr Isobel Falconer and Dr Colin Chant, my warmest thanks are due for their unfailing support, encouragement and guidance.

As a primary source, it will become clear how much I have relied upon the local newspaper, the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*. I am indebted to the late Mr Kenneth Whitson, newspaper proprietor, for allowing me access to this unique record of life in Victorian Peebles.

I also owe a great debt of gratitude for the help, patience and courtesy of staffs in the Peebles Library and Museum, the Scottish Borders Archives in Selkirk, the National Archives of Scotland and the National Library in Edinburgh, and the Open University Library in Milton Keynes.

Finally, my thanks are due to my family for their support and forbearance in what has been a somewhat lengthy gestation period.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BoT	Board of Trade
£.s.d.	Pounds, shillings and pence
CRM	Caledonian Railway Minute Book
ed. or eds.	Editor(s)
<i>Herapath</i>	<i>Herapath's Railway Journal</i>
<i>JTH</i>	<i>Journal of Transport History</i>
LLDM	Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway Minute Book
N/A	Not Available or Not Applicable
NAS	National Archives of Scotland
NBRM	North British Railway Minute Book
NLS	National Library of Scotland
<i>P.Adv.</i>	<i>Peeblesshire Advertiser</i>
P.P.	Parliamentary Papers
PRM	Peebles Railway Company Minute Book
SBA	Scottish Borders Council Archives
TCM	Peebles Town Council Minute Book

## Railways

B&LR	Bedale & Leyburn Railway
BR	Berwickshire Railway
BRC	Berwickshire Railway Company
CJR	Crieff Junction Railway
CR	Caledonian Railway
E&GR	Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway
E&PR	Edinburgh & Peebles Railway
EP&DR	Edinburgh, Perth & Dundee Railway
G&PR	Galashiels & Peebles Railway
G&SWR	Glasgow & South Western Railway
LL&DR	Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway
LNWR	London & North Western Railway
LR	Leven Railway
M&CR	Maryport & Carlisle Railway
MR	Midland Railway
NBR	North British Railway
NER	North Eastern Railway
PR	Peebles Railway
PRC	Peebles Railway Company
StAR	St Andrews Railway
SB&BR	Symington, Biggar & Broughton Railway
WR	Wharfedale Railway

## MONEY CONVERSION TABLE

<b>£.s.d</b>	1d	2d	3d	4d	5d	6d	7d	8d	9d	10d	11d	12d = 1s.
<b>£ p</b>	½p	1p	1p	1½p	2p	2½p	3p	3p	4p	4p	4½p	5p
<b>£.s.d</b>	1s	2s	3s	4s	5s	6s	7s	8s	9s	10s	15s	20s = £1
<b>£ p</b>	5p	10p	15p	20p	25p	30p	35p	40p	45p	50p	75p	100p = £1

## DISTANCE CONVERSION TABLE

1 inch	1 foot	1 yard	1 chain	1 furlong	1 mile
2.54 cm.	30.48 cm.	0.914 m.	20.12 m.	0.201 km.	1.609 km.

## LIST OF CONTENTS

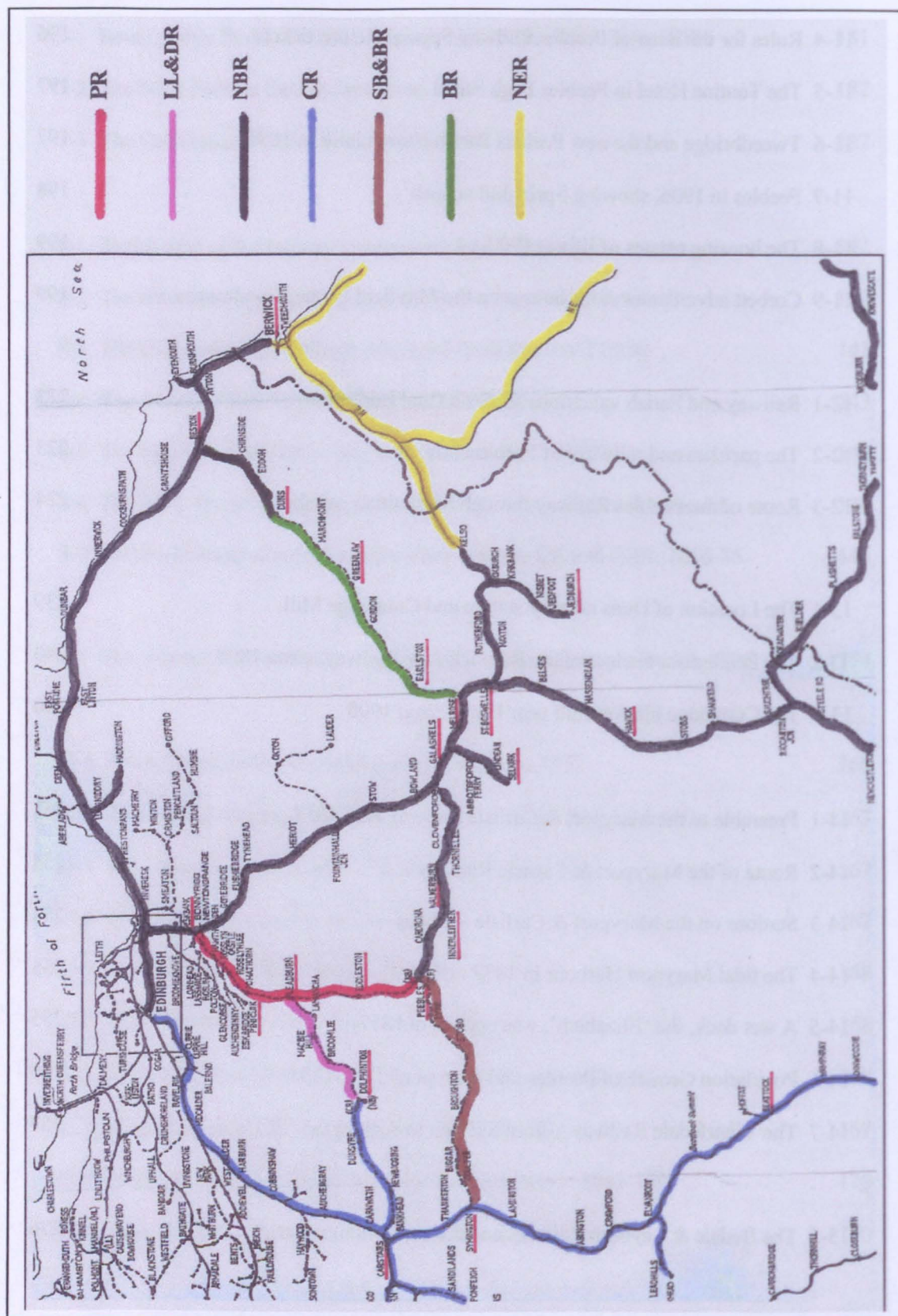
<b>Chapter 1.</b>	Introduction and literature review	1
2.	Peebles before the arrival of the railway in 1855	19
3.	Abortive railway proposals for Peebles	41
4.	John Bathgate—lawyer and railway promoter	49
5.	Thomas Bouch—the role of the railway engineer	73
6.	Biographical sketches of the promoters of the Peebles Railway	97
7.	The railways of Peebles and their land negotiations	117
8.	North British and Caledonian Railway rivalry in Peeblesshire	133
9.	‘Peebles for Pleasure’: the advent of tourism	147
10.	Establishment of the modern woollen industry in Peebles	155
11.	Railway building ticket schemes, and the built environment	171
12.	Local taxation and the railway companies	201
13.	Comparative effects of the railways on Peebles and Duns	225
14.	Two branch lines and their finances	241
15.	Management of the Peebles Railway and other branch lines	259
16.	Summary and conclusions	277
	Bibliography	289
 <b>Appendix 1.</b>	 Peebles Railway Company Financial results	 297
2.	Trades and professions in Victorian Peebles	299
3.	Census returns for Peebles	313
4.	Census returns for Duns	331
5.	Parliamentary Standing Orders for railway bills	339
6.	Allocation of Peebles Railway shares	345
7.	Peebles and the excursionists	349
8.	Railway chronology of south-east Scotland	355

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Frontispiece The railways of south east Scotland in 1866	viii
2-1 Part of John Wood's 1823 town plan of Peebles	35
2-2 W. & A.K. Johnston's 1847 map of Peebles	36
2-3 Tweed Green, Peebles, in 1836 ( <i>painted by Charles Blyth</i> )	37
2-4 The 1831 Population Act—Peeblesshire population statistics	38-9
2-5 Road routes of the Scottish Borders	40
3-1 The railways of southern Scotland in 1851, showing the isolation of Peebles	47
3-2 Proposed route of the abortive Edinburgh & Peebles Railway, 1845	48
4-1 Route of the proposed Peebles Railway, 1852	68
4-2 Newspaper notice required by Parliamentary Standing Orders	69
4-3 Preamble to the Peebles Railway Act, 1853	70
4-4 Letter from Robert Allan, Bathgate's Edinburgh stockbroker	71
4-5 Stations on the Peebles Railway	72
4-6 Stations on the Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway	72
5-1 Sir Thomas Bouch, CE, 1822-1880	93
5-2 Hawthorn of Leith 0-4-2 locomotive, similar to <i>Neidpath Castle</i> and <i>Roslin Castle</i>	93
5-3 Bouch's 'flying bridge' and the wagon ferry <i>Leviathan</i> in Granton harbour	94
5-4 View of the 'flying bridge' on the Burntisland slipway	94
5-5 Bouch's Belah Viaduct, ( <i>painted by J.O. Brown</i> )	95
6-1 The progenitors of the Peebles Railway Company	113
6-2 The house in Biggiesknowe where William Chambers was born	114
6-3 The Chambers Institution, gifted to Peebles in 1859 by William Chambers	114
6-4 Draft Amalgamation Agreement between the PRC and NBR	115

7-1 Route within Peebles of the proposed Innerleithen Railway in 1858	131
7-2 The NBR Peebles East station about 1900	132
7-3 The Caledonian Peebles West station about 1880	132
8-1 Sketch map of the railway interconnections in Peebles	142
8-2 The north loop approaching Peebles East across the NBR sidings	142
8-3 The Caledonian Lyne station was stone-built and cost £1,800	143
8-4 The wooden North British station at Cardrona cost £500	143
8-5 The imposing Caledonian Neidpath viaduct, <i>circa</i> 1880	144
8-6 The NBR Tweed bridge in Peebles in 1961, shortly before the closure	144
8-7 Peebles Railway dividend comparisons with the CR and NBR: 1856-76	145
9-1 The original Peebles Hydro—opened in 1881 and destroyed by fire 1905	154
10-1 Town Council advertisement to attract industry, 1857	166
10-2 The original wholesale tweed warehouse of Walter Thorburn & Co.	167
10-3 The Damdale woollen mill of Walter Thorburn & Bros.	167
10-4 The Damcroft fleece preparation mill	167
10-5 The Tweedside mill of Walter Thorburn & Bros.	168
10-6 The March Street mill of David Ballantyne	168
10-7 The Lowe, Donald 1883 warehouse and Peebles East station	168
10-8 Assets and profits of Lowe, Donald Co. 1862-1891	169
10-9 Numbers employed in the Peebles woollen industry: 1841-1891	170
10-10 Population figures for the Parish of Peebles: 1841-1891	170
11-1 Rules for the issue of Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway Villa tickets	194
11-2 Principal stations on the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway	194
11-3 Rules for the issue of Peebles Railway Building tickets	195

11-4 Rules for the issue of Peebles Railway Special Return tickets	196
11-5 The Tontine Hotel in Peebles High Street	197
11-6 Tweedbridge and the new Peebles Parish church built in 1887	197
11-7 Peebles in 1906, showing Springhill suburb	198
11-8 The housing estates of Ilford: 1900-14	199
11-9 Corbett advertisement for houses on the Mayfield Estate, Goodmayes	199
12-1 Railway and Parish valuations for Stobo and Eddleston	222
12-2 The parishes and railways of Peeblesshire	223
12-3 Route of the Peebles Railway through Midlothian parishes	224
13-1 The Location of Duns railway station and Cumledge Mill	239
13-2 The Leaderfoot viaduct of the Berwickshire Railway, <i>circa</i> 1890	240
13-3 The Cumledge blanket mill near Duns, <i>circa</i> 1900	240
14-1 Preamble to the Maryport & Carlisle Railway Act, 1837	253
14-2 Route of the Maryport & Carlisle Railway	254
14-3 Stations on the Maryport & Carlisle Railway	254
14-4 The tidal Maryport Harbour in 1837	255
14-5 A wet dock, the 'Elizabeth', was opened in 1857	255
14-6 Population Growth of Peebles and Maryport, 1801-1891	256
14-7 The Wharfedale Railway—from Skipton to Arthington	257
15-1 The Bedale & Leyburn Railway and the surrounding district	276



Frontispiece The railways of south-east Scotland in 1866. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Amended map from *A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain, Volume 6: Scotland*, by John Thomas, (Newton Abbot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, 1984).



## INTRODUCTION AND LITERATURE REVIEW

**“If we ask the question ‘what precisely was the contribution made by the railways to the development of —?’ we must acknowledge it is unanswerable in a finally satisfactory form.”<sup>1</sup>**

### Introduction and primary sources

This thesis deals with the promotion, construction and management of the Peebles Railway—a small branch line in the south-east of Scotland—in the second half of the nineteenth century. My aim is to establish that it played a vital role in the development of the Royal Burgh of Peebles. However, although the railway was necessary, it was not sufficient to explain the subsequent physical expansion and economic growth of Peebles. In order to understand the complex relationship between the town and its railway, it will be necessary to consider a range of contextual factors. These include the state of railway technology in the 1850s, the contingency of the principal promoters of the railway, and the background history and economic geography of the area. While dealing with these various aspects, I also propose to illuminate some areas of railway history that have not previously been the subject of detailed academic study.

In the following chapters a number of separate issues will be interwoven. Firstly, there is the formation of the Peebles Railway Company (PRC), together with a description of the procedures that had to be followed in order to obtain the necessary Act of Parliament. Secondly, there is the rejuvenation of Peebles, with changes in its fabric, population and boundaries that were strongly influenced by an updated railway technology that had itself been socially shaped. Thirdly, the activities of the other railway companies in Peeblesshire, and the cause and effect of their bitter rivalry, are dealt with in detail. Fourthly, there are accounts of the Peebles woollen and tourist industries that followed the arrival of the railway. Finally, comparisons are made between Peebles and a neighbouring town, as well as between the Peebles Railway and a number of its contemporaries, in order to evaluate the unique features of the Royal Burgh and its railways.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Simmons, *The Railway in Town and Country 1830-1914* (Newton Abbot, 1986) p.17.

However, before dealing with the railway, we will begin by looking at the depressed condition of Peebles in the 50 years before the Peebles Railway (PR) began operations in 1855. There are several primary sources from which to illustrate the moribund condition of the town during this period, especially during the early part of the century. The most important of these are the works of William Chambers (1800-1883) author, publisher, railway director and philanthropist. Chambers' *History of Peeblesshire* and his *Memoir* of his brother Robert, together give a very vivid picture of the town of their birth and early life.

Further facts and figures on Peebles are provided by the incomparable *Statistical Accounts of Scotland*, written by the incumbent parish ministers and published in 1799 and 1845. The local newspaper and the Minute Books of the Town Council also provide a fascinating record of significant local concerns. To complete the statistical picture I have used the detailed information contained in the Enumerators' Books for Peebles at each Census between 1841 to 1891, together with the earlier estimates from the preceding Population Acts of 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831. The period covered by this thesis ends with the 1891 Census: this was a suitable year to finish since the reorganisation of Scottish local government with the formation of the county councils had taken place in 1889, and the railway network in Peeblesshire had been completed for some years. For the sake of statistical consistency between my various sources, I have defined 'Peebles' as consisting of the coterminous ecclesiastical and civil parishes that included both the Royal Burgh and the 'Landward' area surrounding it. As its population grew, the town began to encroach into the landward area, but the parish boundary itself did not change.

Chambers was a PRC Director for the whole of its independent existence, and his two books on railways are an important source of information, not only on the PR itself, but also on the mid-Victorian railway scene.<sup>2</sup> The first, published in 1856, was specific to the PR and its

---

<sup>2</sup> W.Chambers, 1. *Peebles and Its Neighbourhood, with a Run on Peebles Railway*. (Edinburgh, 1863).  
2. *About Railways*. (Edinburgh, 1866).

immediate effect on Peebles. I have used the revised 1863 edition as a reference, since it deals with the various changes in Peebles during the eight years after the line opened. The second, published in 1866, was about the promotion and general management of railways, subjects on which Chambers had become an expert. His treatment of the theme of railway share subscriptions, calls, debentures and loans is particularly useful.

Over the years, the local newspaper, the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, gave prominent—albeit rather partisan—coverage of all railway events in and around Peebles.<sup>3</sup> Perhaps this was not surprising, since its Editor was a PRC shareholder and his father was not only a shareholder but also one of the two PRC Auditors. When taken in parallel with the evidence of the surviving PRC Minute Books, available in the National Archives of Scotland in Edinburgh, this newspaper testimony is especially important. The *Advertiser* also fully covered a mainly unreported attempt to build a railway between Peebles and Edinburgh in 1845, at the height of the Railway Mania of 1845-6. Starting life as a monthly newspaper in 1845, the *Advertiser* began to publish weekly in 1860, encouraged by the growing population of Peebles. It is an indispensable primary source, chronicling all the significant events and issues affecting the town and county.

## Secondary sources

There were literally hundreds of small railways in Victorian Britain, and, mainly intended for the steam enthusiast, there is now a considerable industry engaged in producing books about them. From publishers such as David & Charles and the Oakwood Press, these works tend to concentrate on the technical and operational aspects of an individual railway. Comparisons with similar lines are usually missing, as are topics such as quality of management or the relevant historical and geographical factors leading to the success or failure of the railway in question. As applied to the PR, this thesis will discuss these neglected topics at some length.

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<sup>3</sup> For example, the *Advertiser* consistently took the side of the North British Railway against the Caledonian, when reporting on their bitter rivalry in Peeblesshire or elsewhere in Scotland.

The *Festschrift* in honour of Jack Simmons <sup>4</sup> provides evidence of the wide range of issues—historical, economic, social and technical—that need to be addressed by any student of railway history. In my review of the academic literature on the history of Victorian railways, particular regard is paid to topics deemed worthy of further research by their various authors. Apart from Alan Robertson's treatise,<sup>5</sup> economic historians have largely ignored Scottish railways. Dealing with the immediate aftermath of the Railway Mania, Lewin <sup>6</sup> provided essential information on the changing financial and political situation faced by railway promoters, including those in Scotland. But, unfortunately, neither Robertson nor Lewin covered the years that saw the promotion and operation of the PR.

Two recent PhD theses on railway topics, by Frank Andrews <sup>7</sup> on the evolving railway pattern in East Kent, and John McGregor,<sup>8</sup> on the promotion of the West Highland Railway in Scotland, have provided useful insights into methodology, treatment of statistical data and the role of political influence. Although I have also used a number of popular works, notably by Acworth, Hamilton-Ellis, and Nock, they are all to varying degrees lacking in the detail required for an academic study of small branch lines. However, Simmons' estimable coverage of rural railways in England and Wales does provide good background material.<sup>9</sup> He observed that with one or two honourable exceptions, histories of the Victorian period ignored the question of exactly how the railways affected the areas in which they operated. What part the PR actually played in the growth and development of Peebles and its neighbourhood therefore forms the major focus of this thesis. Simmons also made an important contribution to branch line literature by his monograph on the Maryport & Carlisle Railway,<sup>10</sup> which will be examined in a later chapter.

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<sup>4</sup> A.K.B. Evans and J.V. Gough, (eds.), *The Impact of the Railway on Society in Britain: essays in honour of Jack Simmons* (Aldershot, 2003).

<sup>5</sup> C.J.A. Robertson, *The Origins of the Scottish Railway System: 1722-1844*. (Edinburgh, 1974).

<sup>6</sup> H.G. Lewin, *The Railway Mania and its Aftermath*. (Newton Abbot, 1936).

<sup>7</sup> F.W.G. Andrews, 'The Effect of the Coming of the Railway on the Towns and Villages of East Kent, 1841-1914' (University of Kent, PhD thesis, 1993).

<sup>8</sup> J. McGregor, 'The Politics of Railway Promotion in the Scottish Highlands: the West Highland Railway Mallaig Extension' (Open University, PhD thesis, 1997).

<sup>9</sup> Simmons, *op.cit* (ref.1) pp.299-335.

<sup>10</sup> J. Simmons, *The Maryport & Carlisle Railway* (Chislehurst, 1947).

From the viewpoint of the economic historian, Robertson's article on the St Andrews Railway is also important, not only for its subject matter, but also—along with his major work on the Scottish railway system—as a shining example of painstaking research.<sup>11</sup> Thomas Bouch, who was Consulting Engineer to the PRC, designed the St Andrews Railway. Simmons suggested that Parris provided a model treatment of a small branch line in his article on the Bedale & Leyburn Railway in north Yorkshire.<sup>12</sup> Like the St Andrews Railway, this is a line contemporaneous with the PR, as is the Wharfedale Railway described by Baughan.<sup>13</sup> We shall cover in some depth the similarities and differences between the PR and these other railways.

Simmons also highlighted another common fault in the literature, in that assertions are often made about railways without real evidence. Thus, an author might state—without further qualification—that the arrival of its railway caused the industrial or population growth of a particular town or city. In this thesis, facts and figures will be adduced to sustain the original hypothesis that the PR was a vital factor in the rejuvenation of Peebles.

“It is in the nature of technological success to mask its origins. We forget about a technology in our using of it through a much deeper forgetting of alternatives.”<sup>14</sup> Because many historians ignored other alternatives and exaggerated the importance of the railways in the nineteenth century economy, there arose a counterfactual movement initiated by Robert Fogel and Albert Fishlow in America—the so-called ‘New Economic History’. “Writers who have held that railroads substantially altered the course of economic growth, or enormously accelerated this growth, implicitly asserted that the economy of the nineteenth century lacked an alternative to the railroad and was incapable of producing one.”<sup>15</sup> Initially, Fogel decided to limit his

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<sup>11</sup> C.J.A Robertson, ‘The cheap railway movement in Scotland: the St Andrews Railway Company’, *Transport History* Vol.7, No.1, Spring 1994, pp. 1-41.

<sup>12</sup> H.W. Parris, ‘Northallerton to Hawes: a study in branch-line history’, *JTH*, 1955-6, Series 2, p.235.

<sup>13</sup> P.E. Baughan, *The Railways of Wharfedale*. (Newton Abbot, 1969).

<sup>14</sup> H. Atmore, ‘Railway interests and the ‘rope of air’, 1840-8’, *BJHS* 37 (3) Sep. 2004 p.279.

<sup>15</sup> R.W. Fogel, *Railroads and American Economic Growth* (Baltimore, Paperback edition, 1964) p.vi.

investigation to the movement of agricultural commodities within the USA, and—after using modern statistical analysis—he concluded that waterways and roads alone could have coped with the distribution of most of the nineteenth century increase in the output of American agriculture. He also believed that the views of historical contemporaries are not necessarily a superior form of evidence, even when the available statistical data are incomplete.<sup>16</sup> Fogel then proceeded to try and measure the ‘social saving’ to the American economy provided by the transport system that actually existed in 1890, rather than by some hypothetical system that excluded the railroads.<sup>17</sup>

Fishlow's detailed historical analysis of the American transport system in the two decades before the Civil War led him to conclude that the contribution of the railroads to the progress of the economy was less than previously thought. “In their different ways, Fogel and Fishlow not only inspired research on the history of transport in economies outside America, but gave rise to an important and continuing debate about method and the employment of economic theory in history.”<sup>18</sup> Their work is significant, in that historians were henceforth constrained from making exaggerated and unsubstantiated claims about the economic effects of railways.

Hawke's study is the most influential and important British illustration of the counterfactual movement.<sup>19</sup> He calculated that in 1865, the railways in England and Wales reduced freight costs for coal by 70 per cent, and for other minerals by 64 per cent,<sup>20</sup> and he concluded that the railway services produced a ‘social saving’ to the economy of between seven and eleven per cent. However, as critics such as Gourvish<sup>21</sup> pointed out, Hawke's calculations were based upon

<sup>16</sup> Fogel, *op.cit.*, (ref.15) p.148. Fortunately, in the case of Peebles and the PRC, we shall find that the available statistical evidence tends to confirm the contemporary witnesses.

<sup>17</sup> D.L. Lightner, ‘Railroads and the American Economy: the Fogel thesis in retrospect.’ *JTH Series 3, Volume 4, Number 2, Sept 1983* pp20–30.

<sup>18</sup> P. O'Brien, *The New Economic History of Railways* (London, 1977) p.93.

<sup>19</sup> G.R. Hawke, *Railroads and Economic Growth in England and Wales*. (Oxford, 1970).

<sup>20</sup> O'Brien, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) p.87.

<sup>21</sup> T.R. Gourvish, *Railways and the British Economy, 1830–1914*. (London, 1980) p.38. “The weight of historical criticism has fallen on the methodological and empirical weaknesses which surround the calculations, many of which are inevitable given the slim data base available to the author.”

inadequate or questionable data, while Simmons <sup>22</sup> and Perkin <sup>23</sup> agreed that Hawke and his followers probably wasted time and energy in unprofitable conjecture.

The main weakness in the arguments of the counterfactual historians is that they deal with events that never happened, and “there is no logical way of deciding if conclusions drawn from such methods are correct or even plausible.” <sup>24</sup> Since the aim of this thesis is to elucidate the strong influence exerted by the PR upon the economy of Peebles in the second half of the nineteenth century, no attempt will be made to follow Hawke by speculating about what might have happened had the railway not been built.

In a *laissez-faire* era, the Government was nevertheless obliged to impose some form of control over the railways in Britain, because of issues such as safety, competition, tariffs and the huge amounts of capital required. Parris covered this aspect of railway history well.<sup>25</sup> Before a private bill for the promotion of a railway received the Royal Assent, it had to overcome a formidable set of Standing Orders and the scrutiny of Committees in both Houses of Parliament. Once completed, the line was not allowed to open for passenger traffic until it had undergone an inspection by the Railway Department of the Board of Trade. The Inspectors, invariably officers of the Royal Engineers, also investigated railway accidents and made suitable safety recommendations to the companies involved. We shall cover an important disagreement between the PRC Board and the Railway Department.

It will also be necessary to look at topics not usually covered in the railway literature. One such was the effect of the 1846 House of Lords Wharnccliffe Order, which prevented directors of a railway company from making unauthorised changes to the powers granted in its enabling Act

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<sup>22</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.* (ref.1) pp.20-1.

<sup>23</sup> H. Perkin, *The Age of the Railway*. (London, 1970) pp.103-4.

<sup>24</sup> O'Brien, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) p.23.

<sup>25</sup> H.W. Parris, *Government and the Railways in Nineteenth Century Britain*. (London, 1965).

of Parliament.<sup>26</sup> Any such changes had henceforth to be approved by a fixed majority of the shareholders at what became known as a Wharncliffe Meeting. The reason for the Order was that certain large companies were promoting branch lines in Parliament without shareholder approval. These branches often had little chance of making a profit: frequently, their purpose was to frustrate a rival company. The North British Railway Company (NBR) would have swallowed up the PRC sixteen years before it actually happened, had it not been for Wharncliffe.

The pioneering work on how the railways impacted upon Victorian cities is by John Kellett.<sup>27</sup> His principal concern was to examine how they affected five major British cities, and he posed a number of important questions that I have adapted to the context of Peebles. Who owned the land on which the railway was built, and what did it cost? What influence did railway building have upon the old central core of Peebles? How critical was the rivalry between the Caledonian Railway Company (CR) and the NBR, and how did it affect Peebles? How did the provision of railway services link up with the promotion of suburban building? Was the railway's influence in stimulating suburban growth as important as is usually assumed? These questions will be addressed in later chapters, and the answers summarised in the final conclusions.

Kellett also pointed to a neglected area of research that will be looked at in the Peebles situation: that is, the role of the entrepreneurial solicitor in the promotion of railways. Kostal, in partially filling this lacuna, presented a very negative view of grasping English lawyers and their operations.<sup>28</sup> John Bathgate, a Peebles solicitor, offers a refreshing contrast to Kostal's jaundiced conclusions, and his career will be covered in some detail. Not only was he a prime mover behind the PRC, as well as its very efficient Secretary, but, apart from his final year with the Company, he did not accept any payment for his considerable services. Bathgate was the Solicitor for the Peebles Railway Bill as it went through the tortuous private bill procedures of

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<sup>26</sup> Lord Wharncliffe was himself a railway director.

<sup>27</sup> J.R. Kellett, *The Impact of Railways on Victorian Cities*. (London, 1969).

<sup>28</sup> R.W. Kostal, *Law and English Railway Capitalism, 1825-75*. (Oxford, 1994).



Parliament in 1852-3, and he was also responsible for appointing and liaising with the railway's Parliamentary agents. Williams<sup>29</sup> on private bill procedures, and Rydz<sup>30</sup> on the subject of Parliamentary agents, provided the background to my description of an operation that was vital to the successful promotion of a railway company. These aspects are often dealt with rather sketchily in railway histories.

There are many examples of fledgling railway companies being saddled with enormous legal expenses in Parliament,<sup>31</sup> and they were usually forced to pay extortionate prices for their land. John Herapath singled out the PRC for its successes here. "Lawyers and landowners must look with the bitterest contempt on the Peebles Railway Company, who have been so impertinent as to obtain their Act of Parliament for about £1,000, and to buy their land at agricultural prices."<sup>32</sup> We shall show how these highly satisfactory outcomes came about, and note that Bathgate was largely responsible. During the ceremony on 9 August 1853 to celebrate the 'cutting of the first sod', Bouch testified that the Company had obtained its land at about a quarter of the usual cost.

In addition to Chambers' book on the Peebles Railway, John Thomas is also an important source of information on the construction and operation of the line. Although he produced a lot of details not found elsewhere, Thomas was occasionally biased, and not altogether reliable.<sup>33</sup> One example is his cavalier treatment of Thomas Bouch, which will be examined later when comparing the PR with other Bouch railways. Another is that he appeared to attach undue importance to the part played in the growth of Peebles by the offer of complimentary railway season tickets to occupiers of new houses. In fact, evidence will be brought to show that this offer was not very productive.

<sup>29</sup> O.C. Williams, *The Historical Development of Private Bill Procedures and Standing Orders in the House of Commons*. (London, 1948).

<sup>30</sup> D.L. Rydz, *The Parliamentary Agent: a history*. (Royal Historical Society, 1979).

<sup>31</sup> Kellett, *op. cit.* (ref.27) Appendix 1, pp. 430-1. The Parliamentary costs of the 26 companies analysed by Kellett, amounted to a huge average of £169,000—almost £11M at present values.

<sup>32</sup> *Herapath's Railway Journal* 15/4/1854, p.393.

<sup>33</sup> J. Thomas, *Forgotten Railways: Scotland*. (Newton Abbot, 1981) pp.28-45.

Kostal produced an important chapter on local taxation and the Poor Law in England, where parish councils seem to have looked upon railway companies as sitting targets, that could be made to supply an ever-increasing proportion of parish incomes. If a company went to law about what amounted to an illegal local income tax, in almost every case the courts backed the parish council. However, when studying the relationship between the railway companies and the parishes of Peeblesshire, we shall find that the situation was rather different in Scotland.

By the 1854 Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act, (16 & 17 Vict. c.91), Parliament had introduced an independent, Treasury-appointed Assessor for Scotland, who took the Poor Law valuations for railways and canals out of the hands of the local authorities. I found no equivalent Act for England,<sup>34</sup> although Parliament in Gladstone's Income Tax Act of 1860 (23 Vict. c.14) took the assessment of the income tax payable by railways away from local commissioners, and gave it to government officials in London.<sup>35</sup> In the light of this step towards centralisation in England, it seems strange that Parliament did not take the opportunity to appoint one or more Assessors for Railways and Canals, with similar powers to those held by the Scottish Assessor.

Apart from the work by Ann Whetstone,<sup>36</sup> there has been little published research into the history of Scottish county administration. Unfortunately, she did not make any mention of railways or their contribution to parish finances in Scotland. Before 1889, like the rest of Scotland, Peeblesshire was run by non-elected local landowners known as Commissioners of Supply, and thereafter by the County Council. Using the relevant clauses of the Lands Valuation (Scotland) Act, the County Valuation Rolls, and the works by Armour<sup>37</sup> and Munro<sup>38</sup>

<sup>34</sup> After a search of the *Chronological Table of the Statutes Part 1, 1235-1950* (HMSO, 1985).

<sup>35</sup> R. Colley, 'Railways and mid-Victorian income tax', *JTH*, Vol.24, Issue 1, Mar. 2003, p.79.

<sup>36</sup> A.E. Whetstone, *Scottish County Government in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries*. (Edinburgh, 1981).

<sup>37</sup> S.B. Armour, *The Valuation of Property for Rating in Scotland*. (Edinburgh, 1892).

<sup>38</sup> W. Munro, *On the Valuation of Property*. (Edinburgh, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 1890). The catalogues for the Advocates and the Signet Libraries in Edinburgh both include the first edition of Munro, published in 1886. Is it a measure of the importance of Munro to Edinburgh lawyers that these copies are missing from the libraries?

on property valuation, I shall attempt to fill this gap in the literature, by comparing the system of railway taxation as found in Peeblesshire with that of English parishes. Munro is particularly important, as he became the Railway and Canals Assessor in 1880.

The introduction of the factory-based woollen industry after the PR opened forms a crucial part of the evidence to confirm the assertion that the railway was the catalyst for the rejuvenation of Peebles. Descriptive, non-statistical information is contained in a history of Peeblesshire edited by Walter Buchan, which sketches the rise of the local woollen industry from the days of handloom weaving.<sup>39</sup> The authoritative chapter on the woollen industry of Peebles was written by Michael Thorburn, joint owner and first Managing Director of two flourishing woollen mills established in 1869 and 1875. He was quite clear that the railway was responsible for the industrial development of the Peebles woollen trade. Without the PR, he and his elder brother would not have put their money into building the Thorburn mills. His father, Walter Thorburn, a PRC Director, owned the largest wholesale tweed warehouse in the south of Scotland when it opened in Peebles in 1861. Twenty years later it was exporting high quality cloth from Peebles and elsewhere, through a world-wide network of subsidiary companies and agents.

The two academic works on the woollen industry in Scotland are by Norman Murray<sup>40</sup> and Clifford Gulvin,<sup>41</sup> in which Peebles is virtually neglected. Murray made an isolated reference to a list detailing the number of hand looms in use in the south of Scotland in 1776, in which Peebles possessed more than either Galashiels or Selkirk. The Thorburn and Ballantyne woollen mills arrived in the wake of the railway companies, and were outside Murray's period. The lack of statistics for these Peebles mills is probably why Gulvin neglected them in favour of the factories in Walkerburn and Innerleithen, the two other woollen centres in Peeblesshire.

<sup>39</sup> J.W. Buchan, (ed.), *A History of Peeblesshire* (Glasgow, 1925) Vol.1, pp.217-24.

<sup>40</sup> N. Murray, *The Scottish Handloom Weavers 1790-1850: a social history*. (Edinburgh, 1978).

<sup>41</sup> C. Gulvin, *The Tweedmakers: A History of the Scottish Fancy Woollen Industry 1600-1914*. (Newton Abbot 1973).

Of the two Thorburn mills, one burned down in 1965, and the other was demolished in 1968.<sup>42</sup> The last Managing Director of the Thorburn Company before its closure told me that he is not aware of any surviving records, and none are registered with the National Archives of Scotland. I have personally checked the old records in the only woollen mill now left in Peebles—Robert Noble, formerly Ballantyne—and found there is nothing left of the Victorian period relevant to this thesis. Evidence to support Michael Thorburn's assertion of the crucial role of the PR will therefore have to come from other sources—news items in the *Advertiser*, commercial directories, and the Census returns. Fortunately, the annual accounts of the Thorburn tweed warehouse have survived, and are an important indicator of the health of the local woollen industry between 1861 and 1891.

The rapid growth of this industry between the 1860s and 1890s caused an influx of workers into Peebles, putting great pressure on the available housing stock. The construction of new, affordable houses failed to keep pace with demand, which was a constant source of complaint by the Editor of the *Advertiser*. The Census returns will be used to note the ages and places of origin of the mill employees, and to record how many of them—and the other newcomers to Peebles—were living in the growing number of lodging houses.<sup>43</sup> As there was no local pool of experienced railway labour, the PRC was obliged to recruit its skilled workers from outside Peeblesshire. In the absence of employee records—apart from names of the senior PRC staff—the Census Enumerators' Books are the only source of information on the origins and jobs of the railwaymen who took up residence in Peebles, although Brown and Lawson provide some useful background information.<sup>44</sup> When the CR reached Peebles in 1864, it tackled the housing problem by building a number of cottages for its employees near the Caledonian station, in the appropriately named 'Caledonian Road'.

<sup>42</sup> There was also a small fleece mill that the Thorburn family had taken over, also demolished in 1968.

<sup>43</sup> The Peebles pages in the 1867 edition of *Slaters Commercial Directory of Scotland* (pp.1303-08) show a new category, 'Lodging Houses', in which there were 20 entries (Appendix 2).

<sup>44</sup> J.L. Brown, and I.C. Lawson, (eds.), *History of Peebles, 1850-1990* (Edinburgh, 1990) pp.321-44.

Census materials in this thesis are also used when looking at the number of carriers and carters operating in Peebles over the period 1841-91. Wray Vamplew wrote a useful background article on the effect of the railways on carriers in Victorian Scotland.<sup>45</sup> Using Post Office Directories, he concluded, not surprisingly, that the railways had a significant and detrimental effect on the long-distance carrier in Scotland. Vamplew also found evidence that many carriers in Scotland had begun to work under contract to the railway companies. The 1852 and 1867 editions of Slater's Commercial Directory provide confirmation that the PR hastened the demise of the carriers from Peebles to Glasgow and Edinburgh. On the other hand, there was no parallel fall in the number of carters living in the Burgh. According to Smout, carting was "the first refuge of the agricultural labourer come to town."<sup>46</sup> In fact, there were more carters in Peebles in 1891 than there were in the period immediately before the PR began operations. Prior to the advent of the internal combustion engine, these men were presumably engaged in short-haul work, focused on the railway stations.

Peebles had few visitors before the arrival of the railway in July 1855. However, by the end of that first month the PR was already operating excursion trains, and, with the help of the NBR, was bringing in as many as 500 day-trippers at a time.<sup>47</sup> Peeblesshire, from being one of the most isolated districts in Britain, had now become one of the most accessible. With their Balmoral estate, Queen Victoria and Prince Albert had set a trend for Scottish holidays, and the beautiful setting of the Tweed Valley in the heart of Sir Walter Scott country, brought increasing numbers of affluent English visitors. This trend, and the growing popularity of hydropathic establishments in Britain, prompted the building of the Peebles Hydro, opened in 1881. It quickly established the town as the leading centre for visitors to the Scottish Borders. The Hydro was originally planned for Innerleithen, a village six miles further down the Tweed Valley, with a locally-famous source of spa water, the St Ronan's Well. However, a

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<sup>45</sup> W. Vamplew, 'Railways and the Scottish transportation system', *JTH Railway* Vol.1, (1996) pp.13-25.

<sup>46</sup> T.C. Smout, *A Century of the Scottish People, 1830-1950*. (London, 1987) p.93.

<sup>47</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, 1/8/1855.

magnificent south-facing site leased by the landowner on advantageous terms, and the close proximity of two railway stations in Peebles, seem to have been the deciding factors in the Hydro's eventual location.<sup>48</sup>

Every town is unique, and I believe that much of the uniqueness of Peebles and its railway was due to a trio of very special, public-spirited citizens. Shrewd as well as visionary, and right for their time and place, John Bathgate, William Chambers and Walter Thorburn not only had the drive and the business acumen to create and run a prosperous country railway, but they also made other invaluable contributions to the advancement of their much-loved town.

### **Background to the research**

While working on a local project for an Open University course on Cities and Technology,<sup>49</sup> I found a number of primary and secondary information sources on Peebles and the PRC which are relevant to this thesis. My first tasks as a research student were to extend this local project by taking in other railways of the same period, to expand the bibliography, and to find a similar town in the Scottish Borders to compare with Peebles. I also looked for evidence to confirm my belief that the principal promoters of the PRC also played a fundamental role in the rejuvenation of the town, before and after the arrival of the railway. As some of the significant works on Victorian railways are now more than 30 years old, I also studied recent issues of peer-reviewed journals such as the *Economic History Review*, *The Journal of Transport History* and *The British Journal of the History of Science*. In doing so, my aim was to become aware of the current trends in railway historiography, and to learn how contextual historians might deal with the kind of themes relevant to Peebles and the surrounding district. Unfortunately, there were very few articles that were pertinent.

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<sup>48</sup> H. Thom, *The Peebles Hydro: a Short History* (Peebles, 1996) p.1.

<sup>49</sup> This course, AT308, covered the history of technology from the pre-industrial era in Mesopotamia to the modern wired city in the USA. There are three course texts in the series *Cities and Technology*, edited by D. Goodman and C.W. Chant, and published in 1999 by The Open University and Routledge in London.

I used Pigot's and Slater's Commercial Directories to monitor the changing patterns of trade in the town. They illustrate the rising prosperity in Peebles by the growing number of banks and insurance companies and by the increasing variety of shops and tradesmen. For example, the 1837 Directory lists no plumbers in Peebles, since there was no piped water to houses in the town at this date. But, thirty years later as a result of public health concerns, the Town Council had constructed a reservoir and water mains, and with a growing number of middle-class villas, there was enough work to occupy three firms of plumbers.

In choosing a town to compare with Peebles I decided upon Duns, the principal town of Berwickshire, despite the fact that available information was relatively scarce. The choice of town was principally because in the period under review Duns was of a similar size to Peebles, and also had the benefits of railway communication by means of a locally-promoted railway company, as well as by the NBR. There were significant and interesting differences between the 1862 Act of the Berwickshire Railway and the Peebles Railway Act of 1853, with which it will be compared. Unfortunately, none of the Berwickshire Railway Minute Books have survived.

Duns had an important woollen mill—established in 1854—situated outside the town but within Duns parish, which built up a reputation at home and abroad for the quality of its blankets.<sup>50</sup> The same family (William Laidlaw and his sons and grandsons) controlled this business for over a century, and their influence on Duns may be likened to that of the Thorburn family in Peebles. Unfortunately, Duns lacked a local historian of the calibre of Chambers, so that much of my information has had to be derived from the Census returns and a local trade directory. The description of Duns in the *New Statistical Account* is poor compared with that for Peebles, possibly because of the age of the Parish Minister, the Rev. George Cunningham. His age was given as 75 in the 1841 Census. However, useful comparisons can still be made between the parishes of Duns and Peebles, which provide some interesting contrasts.

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<sup>50</sup> *Southern Reporter*, 15/4/1954, covering the Centenary celebrations at the Cumledge Mill.

### Structure of the thesis

The thesis falls into two parts. After this Introduction and Literature Review, Chapters 2 to 10 and 11 to 15 form distinct sections. The first Part deals with the history of the Royal Burgh of Peebles before and after the railways. It covers the promotion and the construction of the Peebles Railway, and discusses the effects that this venture had upon the town and district. The emphasis in this Part is confined to Peebles and Peeblesshire. The balance shifts in Part 2, where a number of the noteworthy social and economic effects of the railways of Peebles are examined in a wider context. Secondary literature on a selection of railways in both Scotland and England is explored, to see how far the Peebles experience of growth, industry and tourism was repeated elsewhere. The final chapter ties the two sections together, and stresses the originality and importance of the comparative chapters, especially those on local taxation, building tickets and railway management. It also shows how examples from a small country railway may be used to help fill gaps in the existing literature, and to answer some of the significant questions raised by Kellett and Simmons in their seminal works.

The prominence given to the role of the PR in the rejuvenation of the town raises the vexed question of technological determinism. My stance is similar to that of Staudenmaier<sup>51</sup> and recent contextual historians of technology, who have concluded that it is wrong to isolate technology from the cultural milieu within which it is found. This is certainly true for the Peebles situation, since the timing of the PRC promotion and the social and economic circumstances must also be taken into account. It was a vital to the success of the PRC, that in the early 1850s a way of greatly reducing the costs of building country branch lines had become available. Nevertheless, Peebles finally got its railway not just because the technology was now appropriate but, above all, because local people wanted 'their' railway as a matter of utility and of civic pride, and were prepared to finance and to use it.

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<sup>51</sup> J.M Staudenmaier, *Technology's Storytellers: reweaving the human fabric* (Boston, Mass., 1985). In Chapter 4, Staudenmaier deals with technology and its cultural ambience."



Finally, the role of the PR was neatly summed up by Rae Montgomery—a former manager with British Railways and well known to enthusiasts in the south of Scotland as an expert on local railways—who contributed an important chapter on the railways of Peebles in a recent history.<sup>52</sup>

**“The Peebles Railway, conceived and run on the most economical principles by Peeblesshire people for Peeblesshire people, was an admirable enterprise of that age, and proved to be a major contributory factor in the growth and prosperity of the town.”**

The purpose of this thesis is to explain how and why this came about.

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<sup>52</sup> R. Montgomery in Brown and Lawson, (eds.), *op.cit.*, (ref.44) p.343.



## PEEBLES BEFORE THE ARRIVAL OF THE RAILWAY IN 1855

**“In the early years of this century, Peebles was little advanced from the condition in which it had mainly rested for several hundred years previously. It was eminently a quiet place—as quiet as the grave or as Peebles is a phrase used by Cockburn”<sup>1</sup>**

Peebles is situated at the confluence of the River Tweed and its tributary the Eddleston Water, 22 miles south of Edinburgh. A settlement known to the Romans, Peebles was raised to the status of a Royal Burgh around 1150 by a charter of King David I, who also granted the town a gift of land.<sup>2</sup> A session of the Scottish Parliament was convened here in 1356, and its charter and lands were confirmed and extended by a succession of Scottish kings who enjoyed Peebles as a base for deer hunting. In pre-Reformation times, Peebles was a centre of pilgrimage to its Cross Kirk, where many miracles were said to have occurred near the spot where an ancient cross had been found in May 1251.<sup>3</sup> But, by the second quarter of the eighteenth century, “every family of note has fled from the burgh, which is only heard of from the accounts of such enterprising travellers as Daniel Defoe and Bishop Forbes.”<sup>4</sup> Misgovernment and the cupidity of a succession of Town Councils resulted in the loss of most of the Burgh lands, and by 1800, Peebles carried a burden of debt on which it could ill afford to pay the interest.<sup>5</sup>

Until the Local Government (*Scotland*) Act of 1975, Peebles was the county town of Peeblesshire.<sup>6</sup> From the middle of the eighteenth to the second quarter of the nineteenth century, the county was one of the slowest growing in Scotland. Its population rose by only 12.8 per cent compared to the neighbouring county of Lanarkshire which trebled its population, and when Scotland as a whole saw a rise of 27 per cent.<sup>7</sup> Lying within the Southern Uplands,

<sup>1</sup> W. Chambers, *Memoir of Robert Chambers* (Edinburgh, 6<sup>th</sup> edn., 1872) p.10.

<sup>2</sup> J.W. Buchan, (ed.) *A History of Peeblesshire* (Glasgow, 1925) Vol.1, p.56.

<sup>3</sup> W. Chambers, *History of Peeblesshire* (Edinburgh, 1864) pp.51-2.

<sup>4</sup> W. Chambers, *Peebles and Its Neighbourhood with a Run on Peebles Railway* (Edinburgh, 1863) p.70. The 1707 Act of Union had made London a magnet for Scottish upper-class families.

<sup>5</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) pp.302-312.

<sup>6</sup> The county was subsumed—with three other small shires, Roxburgh, Selkirk and Berwick—into one local authority, the Scottish Borders Council.

<sup>7</sup> J.L. Brown and I.C. Lawson, (eds.) *History of Peebles: 1850-1990* (Edinburgh, 1990) p.20

"Peeblesshire along with the neighbouring county of Selkirk goes to form the most purely highland area in the south of Scotland."<sup>8</sup> With only limited amounts of land under 600 feet, sheep rearing has always been the principal agricultural occupation in the county.

The small proportion of arable land in Peeblesshire is found mainly in the valleys of the River Tweed and its tributaries. In the eighteenth century there was still an established market for oats and barley in Peebles, most of which was "carried from the richer corn country on the east, to the mining and manufacturing country on the west."<sup>9</sup> Unfortunately for Peebles, this grain market became the victim of technological progress, since it was lost to Dalkeith in Midlothian when a good road was built over Soutra Hill, and the Forth-Clyde Canal was opened in 1790.

Due to the plentiful supply of local wool, handloom weaving had long been the principal occupation in Peebles, the weavers having been incorporated in 1563 as the first of the Burgh's trade crafts.<sup>10</sup> A waulk mill had been in operation since 1480, for fulling (firming and compacting) the finished cloth, but an attempt by the Scottish Trustees for Manufactures in 1740 to plant a woollen factory at the foot of Tweed Green proved to be abortive.<sup>11</sup> However, there were 40 hand looms in Peebles used for coarse woollens in 1776,<sup>12</sup> and linen and cotton were also being woven here by 1800.

James Chambers, the father of William and Robert, was the local agent for two Glasgow cotton merchants, and he conducted business "on a pretty extensive scale at Peebles, having sometimes as many as a hundred looms in his employment."<sup>13</sup> Several weavers actually worked on the ground floor of his house beside the 'Cuddy' (Eddleston Water) at Biggiesknowe, Peebles

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<sup>8</sup> Buchan, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) Vol.1, p.256 Contributed by H.M. Conacher, Scottish Board of Agriculture.

<sup>9</sup> *Statistical Account of Scotland Vol.III, 1797* (Wakefield, 1979 reprint) p.876.

<sup>10</sup> Brown and Lawson, *op.cit.*, (ref.7) p.25.

<sup>11</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.224

<sup>12</sup> N. Murray, *The Scottish Hand Loom Weavers 1790-1850*. (Edinburgh, 1990) p.2.

<sup>13</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref 1.) p.14.

(Fig.2-2), where his two sons spent their childhood years. The family were able “to live on an equality with the best families of the place”, while weavers “could realise two pounds a week, sometimes even more, and many young men of good connections had joined the trade.”<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, this prosperity was not to last for the Chambers family. As for the handloom weavers in the Scottish Borders, “it is certain that after 1800 the growth of capitalism tended to reduce the vast majority of weavers to the position of mere wage earners working for employers.”<sup>15</sup> By the middle of the century their earnings had fallen dramatically.

### **Peebles from 1800 to 1850**

According to the Parish Minister, the Rev. Dr. William Dalgleish, writer of the Peebles entry in the *Statistical Account* of 1797, the population of the Parish of Peebles was then approximately 2,360, while an official estimate following the Population Act of 1801 gave the smaller total of 2,088. Evidence from the returns of the tax on clocks and watches in 1797 shows that it was hardly a prosperous parish. In the Royal Burgh of Peebles there were only “15 clocks, 19 silver and 2 gold watches: in the country part of the parish, 4 clocks, 5 silver, and no gold watches.”<sup>16</sup>

In 1803, during the war against Napoleon, the population of Peebles was augmented by about 30 prisoners of war, mainly Dutch and Belgian seamen, who were on parole. A number of them took up handloom weaving of cotton. (A note on the Scottish cotton industry, and how Peebles became involved in it, will be found at the end of this chapter). About a hundred more prisoners arrived in 1810—French, Polish and Italian officers—who made a considerable impact on the torpid burgh. “Gentlemanly in manners, they made for themselves friends in the town and neighbourhood.”<sup>17</sup> In 1812 they were suddenly moved from Peebles to Sanquhar in the county

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<sup>14</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref 1.) p.14.

<sup>15</sup> Murray, *op.cit.*, (ref.12) p.14.

<sup>16</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) pp.274-5.

<sup>17</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) pp.12-13

of Dumfriesshire, and their hasty departure “inflicted considerable injury, for a number of them had contracted debts which they were unable to liquidate.” James Chambers was one of several men who were bankrupted.

Mainly occupied by weavers and labourers, most houses in Peebles were small and built of the local whinstone, many of them consisting only of a kitchen, parlour and bed-closet, with roofs mainly of thatch. Robert Chambers described Peebles as “a finished town” in the early years of the nineteenth century, by which he meant that, with the odd exception, no new houses were ever built in it.<sup>18</sup> Remnants of the ancient town walls were still to be found around the East and West Ports. The burgh consisted of three principal thoroughfares: High Street, Northgate, and the Old Town which included Biggiesknowe and Bridgegate. I have coloured these streets on the maps produced by John Wood in 1823 and W.& A.K. Johnston in 1847 (Figs.2-1 and 2-2).<sup>19</sup> The maps bear out Chambers’ contention that new buildings were scarce, for we can see that over a quarter of a century, there were hardly any changes in the physical layout of Peebles.

### Population changes

The conclusion of the Parish Minister, the Rev. John Elliot—who wrote the Peebles entry in the *New Statistical Account* in March 1834—was that the local population had declined over the previous three hundred years. “Before the Reformation the population was probably far greater than at present. The numerous religious houses, the charitable endowments, the hospitia, the mills and breweries, all betoken a great population, and a well-maintained set of inhabitants.”<sup>20</sup> A “very accurate list” of the population of the Parish compiled by the Kirk Session in 1830 produced a figure of 2,817, while the official estimate of 1831 was 2,750 (see Note 21). But, it was the 1841 Census that produced the first reliable figure for the population of the Parish of Peebles; a total of 2,629, with 1,908 living in the town. A decade later there was little change,

<sup>18</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.10.

<sup>19</sup> The Johnston map was used in the Peebles Railway Parliamentary submission in 1852.

<sup>20</sup> *New Statistical Account of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1845) Vol.III, p.10.

as the 1851 Census revealed that the Parish figure was now 2,669, of whom 1982 were in the Burgh. The earlier estimates and the Census figures clearly indicate that there was little growth in the population of either the Parish or the Royal Burgh of Peebles during the first half of the nineteenth century (Table 2.1). However, we can just discern the start of a drift of people from the landward area into the town, as the result of changes in farming methods during the 1840s.

DATE	BURGH	LANDWARD	PARISH TOTAL
1801	N/A	N/A	2088
1811	N/A	N/A	2485
1821	N/A	N/A	2701
1831	N/A	N/A	2750
1841	1908	721	2629
1851	1982	687	2669

Table 2.1. Population of Peebles in the first half of the nineteenth century.<sup>21</sup>

### Transport before the railway

As described by William Chambers, public transport to and from Edinburgh in 1800 was rudimentary.<sup>22</sup> Goods were still brought in by packhorses and carts, and, despite the fact that a turnpike road had been open for over twenty years, the only passenger conveyance was William Wilson's 'Caravan'. This was a one-horse, two-wheeled vehicle that took ten hours to reach Edinburgh. Because of highwaymen, travellers on horseback armed themselves with pistols, and for mutual safety tended to travel in groups. When the 'Caravan' was replaced in 1806 by the 'Fly', a two-horse version of an old-fashioned post-chaise, the journey time was reduced to five hours. This thrice-weekly service carried four passengers, and the demand was such that it often had to be booked a week in advance. It was impossible to do the return journey on the

<sup>21</sup> The population statistics for 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831 are from the returns required by the Population Acts of these years. The figures for 1841 and 1851 are from the Census returns.

<sup>22</sup> Chambers, W., *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.277.

same day, and so the cost of night stops in Edinburgh was in addition to the fare of 10s.6d each way (about £32 in present-day money, see Note 38). The 'Fly' was thus only affordable by the more affluent. The postal service was equally dear, and Buchan's *History* records that in 1807 an express letter from Peebles to Edinburgh cost 7s.4d. Croall & Co, the Edinburgh coach proprietors, finally introduced a daily stagecoach service in 1825, which cut the journey time to about three hours. The single fare for inside passengers was reduced to 5s 0d after a Peebles coach builder, Peter Pennycook, began to operate a rival service. However, he eventually sold out to the Croall company,<sup>23</sup> which then continued to provide the only passenger service to Edinburgh until the arrival of the railway in 1855. There were also livery stables for those like John Bathgate who did not own a horse, but occasionally preferred to ride. But for the 'labouring classes' or impecunious students attending the University of Edinburgh, a 22-mile walk was the only option.

## Education

Education had a high priority in the town. There were two schools for boys in Peebles at this time; the Burgh (or English) School and the Grammar (or Latin) School. Both schools were "under the patronage of the Burgh, and the teachers appointed and paid by the Council."<sup>24</sup> The schools stood next to each other on Tweed Green, and can be seen in the 1836 painting by Charles Blyth (Fig.2-3). According to the *Second Statistical Account*, in 1834 there were 81 day pupils in the Burgh School, and 18 day pupils and 48 boarders in the Grammar School.<sup>25</sup> Both William and Robert Chambers attended the Burgh School for two years, and then went on to the Grammar School until the age of 13. Robert later wrote that "with a good grounding in Latin and Greek, fitting him for the university," the total cost of his school education had still been less

<sup>23</sup> Brown and Lawson, *op.cit.*, (ref.7) p.22.

<sup>24</sup> Buchan, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) Vol.3, p.652. "A Report by the Commissioners in 1833—The branches of education taught in the English school are reading, writing, arithmetic, geography, and mathematics; and in the Grammar school English, writing, arithmetic, mathematics, geography, history, and the French, Latin and Greek languages."

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, p.652.



than £10.<sup>26</sup> However, because of the bankruptcy of their father, William and Robert were denied the opportunity of proceeding to a university education.

There was also a school for girls, carried on in a private house, which was supported by the Town Council who allowed the Mistress a salary of £5 a year.<sup>27</sup> In addition to the schools under the patronage of the Council, the *Second Statistical Account* notes that there were two dame schools and three private schools. The reputation of the Burgh and Grammar Schools appears to have been high, and remained so into the second half of the century. On the retirement of the Master of the Burgh School in 1861, 78 candidates applied for the vacant post.<sup>28</sup> That same year, the Rector of the Grammar School, Dr Thomas Robson, was “selected from a leet of forty-one candidates from all parts of the empire to take charge of one of the largest—if not the largest—school in Scotland.”<sup>29</sup> This was Madras Academy in Cupar, Fife.

### Industry and Employment

According to Dawson, Peebles still had “manufactures of plaiding and coarse woollens, stockings and cambrics,” in 1857, but the number of hand looms had fallen from 190 in 1828 to only 50 a decade later.<sup>30</sup> If Dawson's 1828 figure was accurate, there appears to have been a dramatic fall in the number of weavers in Peebles between 1828 and 1831. The *Abstract of Returns* for the Population Act of 1831 (11 Geo.IV. c.30) states that the town had a total of 80 weavers in cotton, flax and wool, including hosiery (Fig.2-4). Dawson's 1837 figure of 50 looms in the town is probably correct, for at the 1841 Census there were 81 handloom weavers and stocking frame knitters in the parish as a whole, but by 1851 that number had dropped to 38 (see Appendix 3). The £2 per week income of the weaver had long gone, as the *New Statistical Account* records that “with the utmost diligence” very few weavers “earn more than six shillings

<sup>26</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.53.

<sup>27</sup> *New Statistical Account*, *op.cit.*, (ref.20) p.19. This allowance was raised to £10 in 1834.

<sup>28</sup> Town Council Minutes, (TCM) 21/2/1861.

<sup>29</sup> Buchan, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) Vol.3, p.654.

<sup>30</sup> J.H.Dawson, *New Issue of the Abridged Statistical History of Scotland*. (Edinburgh, 1857) p.762.

a-week.” Live-in female servants earned between £6 and £8 a year, while “ploughmen lodged in farm cottages get £8 to £14.”<sup>31</sup> Fullarton’s *Gazetteer* of 1851 goes so far as to assert that in Peebles, “the weavers, as numerous as possible, migrate to the woollen district of Galashiels and Hawick, or obtain employment from farmers or gardeners.”<sup>32</sup> However, in view of the drift from country to town as small farms were consolidated into larger units, it is unlikely that many weavers finished up as farm workers. In 1831, for example, many of the labourers not in agriculture were “employed on the public roads.”<sup>33</sup>

After the original *Statistical Account* of 1797, the next indication of the state of the professions, trades and shops in Peebles was in the *Abstract of Returns* for the 1831 Population Act (Fig.2-4). In a column headed “Capitalists, Bankers, Professional and other Educated Men” there is a figure of 30 noted in the Parish of Peebles. However, there is no breakdown by profession. The two largest employment categories by size were ‘Retail Trades and Handicrafts’ and ‘Female Servants’. The 1837 Commercial Directory published by Pigot & Co. expresses surprise that as far as industry and external trade are concerned, “Peebles takes a station inferior to many towns of less magnitude, and not so happily favoured by situation.” It confirms that the woollen and cotton weaving branches “have gone to decay, and at present the town cannot boast of any staple manufacture.”<sup>34</sup> However, there were water-powered flour mills, three breweries and two tanneries, together with a bank, several fire and life insurance agencies and a number of lawyers. These businesses will be found in the information compiled from the commercial directories in Appendix 2, which also lists the various innkeepers, tradesmen and shopkeepers.

<sup>31</sup> *New Statistical Account*, *op.cit.*, (ref.20) p.15.

<sup>32</sup> Fullarton’s *Topographical, Statistical and Historical Gazetteer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1851) Vol.2, p.495.

<sup>33</sup> From the *Abstract of Returns* for the 1831 Population (Act 11 Geo.IV. c.30) p.1013.

<sup>34</sup> Pigot & Cos., *National and Commercial Directory of Scotland*. (Edinburgh, 1837) p.659.

Peebles had no bank until the British Linen Bank established a branch in 1825. Until then all banking transactions, drafts and payments were carried out by means of carriers to and from the banks in Edinburgh—a great inconvenience for local businessmen and farmers. That same year saw the inauguration of a stagecoach service to Edinburgh. It therefore seems that 1825 was a significant year in the history of Peebles: a turning point that saw the town begin to emerge from its long stagnation. This was especially to be seen in the Town Council, where over the next few years candidates of a higher calibre—such as Walter Thorburn—began to offer themselves for election. As Chambers remarked of the new administration, “they contrast in a remarkable manner with the strange system of management under the old regime.”<sup>35</sup>

### **Town Council and Civic Improvements**

The rehabilitated Town Council made a number of improvements to try and attract new industry. In 1828, it allowed the newly-formed Gas Company to lay mains under the streets, to provide lighting for streets, shops and the more affluent households. The following year, the Council built a cauld (weir) across the River Tweed to provide waterpower for any manufacturing industry it could attract to the town. The narrow bridge over the River Tweed (Fig.2-3) was widened from 8 feet to 16 feet in 1834, by a contribution of £500 from the Council and a public subscription. The old wooden pipes supplying the town wells were replaced in 1838, and the slaughterhouse was moved away from a vennel (alleyway) off the High Street, a few years later.

The Parish Minister mentions that the local authority advertised the plentiful supply of water and the availability of labour, in an attempt to attract “manufacturers, capitalists and others” to Peebles.”<sup>36</sup> According to the *New Statistical Account*, “Much has been said against the want of

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<sup>35</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref. 3) p.313. However, when we come to look at the proceedings of the council in the 1850s, in connection with the coming of the railways and other matters, we shall find a tendency to avoid important issues by leaving them ‘on the table.’

<sup>36</sup> *New Statistical Account*, *op.cit.*, (ref.20) p.15.

enterprise and public spirit in the inhabitants not introducing manufactures. The high price of coals is one obstacle.”<sup>37</sup> It was not until 1856, a year after the appearance of the Peebles Railway, that a Hawick manufacturer, Thomas Dickson, opened a short-lived woollen operation in an old water-powered corn mill on the River Tweed (Fig.2-3). Dickson moved out the following year, and the building was then refurbished by the Council. A buyer was found, and the mill began the spinning of yarn and the weaving of tweed in 1859 (Chapter 10).

Evidence of a new sense of civic pride is found in the successful establishment of the *Peeblesshire Advertiser* by John Bathgate: the first edition appeared on 2 February 1845. It carried an editorial entitled “Improvements in Peebles”, together with a list of subscribers to a fund aiming to raise £1,100 to carry out an ambitious scheme suggested by William and Robert Chambers. This project was to include “the lowering and repaving of the streets and the entrance to the town, the laying down of foot pavements on both sides of the streets, the removal of some projecting buildings, the introduction of a more abundant supply of water, the renewing and repairing of drains, the beautifying of Tweed Green &c.” But, for such a formidable programme, £1,100 seems to have been a remarkably low figure.<sup>38</sup>

The target of £1,100 was comfortably achieved, with the Town Council putting up £200 to head the subscription list. The names of Chambers, Bathgate, Thorburn, Sir Graham Montgomery, Lord Elibank and Sir Adam Hay also appear: these names will feature in later chapters dealing with the Peebles Railway Company. Public subscriptions for various causes—not merely those of immediate concern to Peebles itself<sup>39</sup>—were a frequent feature at this time, and these same names appear regularly in the subscription lists.

<sup>37</sup> Coal was expensive because of high transport costs. To carry a ton of goods from Edinburgh to Peebles cost more than the same load by sea or rail from Edinburgh to London. This was a major incentive behind the promotion of the Peebles Railway (Chambers (*op.cit.*, ref.4) p.7)

<sup>38</sup> *The Oxford Companion to British Railway History* (Oxford, 1997, p.579), quotes a factor of about 60 when converting mid-19th century prices to present-day values. So, £1,100 in 1845 would have been less than £70,000 today, a sum that would not have gone very far.

<sup>39</sup> One example was a fund to help distressed Lancashire cotton workers during the American Civil War.

Several previous attempts had been made to link Peebles by rail with other towns in the South of Scotland, and we shall look at these failed ventures in the following chapter. Notwithstanding the resurgence of civic activity in Peebles, the Burgh and the County were still not ready to back a railway financially. In August 1845, the Editor of the *Peeblesshire Advertiser* had been in a sanguine mood when he wrote the following somewhat convoluted sentence, in an editorial on the failure of the proposed Edinburgh & Peebles Railway (E&PR). “We do not despair of seeing, in a few years, our ancient burgh regain the comparative position as regards the rest of the country, which it has lost in the general burghal decadence, arising from a variety of causes into which it is here needless to enter.”<sup>40</sup> His optimism remained even after the E&PR Bill was withdrawn from Parliament the following year, for he was confident that it was only a matter of time before a new attempt would ensure that Peebles got its railway. “Those gentlemen who have been disappointed in the fate of the present scheme, will be strengthened by defeat, and, taught by experience, will exert themselves to bring forward a host of influential support in favour of the new undertaking.”<sup>41</sup>

### **Peebles and other Borders woollen towns**

We have so far looked at Peebles in isolation, but we will now place it in the context of similar parishes in Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire—the woollen towns of Hawick, Selkirk, Galashiels and Melrose. A convenient starting point is to compare the population growth in these parishes, from the estimate of 1801 to the 1851 Census. The figures in Table 2-2 clearly show how slowly the Peebles population had grown by 1851, compared to the other towns.

What these parishes had in common was the nature of the topography in which they were situated. Upper Tweeddale and Upper Teviotdale are surrounded by hills, often in excess of 1,000 feet, where sheep farming is the predominant form of agriculture. With the raw material close at hand and plentiful supplies of water for fulling and dyeing—and later for power—it was

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<sup>40</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (P.Adv.) 5/8/1845.

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*, 2/6/1846

Parish	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	% Increase
Peebles	2088	2485	2701	2750	2629	2669	28.0
Hawick	4105	3688	4387	9634	11358	12083	194.3
Selkirk	2098	2422	2696	2883	4347	4739	125.9
Galashiels	1018	986	1358	1364	3014	3379	231.9
Melrose	2625	3132	3467	4339	5331	7365	180.6

Table 2-2. Parish population statistics for selected parishes in the eastern Borders.<sup>42</sup>

only natural that the area should become involved in the manufacture of woollens. As a consequence, the parishes had long been engaged in handloom weaving, although mainly for local consumption. When David Loch—an inspector for the Board of Trustees for Manufactures in Scotland—produced his report on the Scottish woollen industry in 1776, Peebles was more important than Selkirk and Galashiels in the number of looms employed (Table 2-3).<sup>43</sup>

Peebles	40 looms in coarse woollens.
Hawick	65 looms in linen and woollens, mainly the latter.
Selkirk	A few looms but concentrated on spinning.
Galashiels	30 looms.
Melrose	140 looms, all in woollens.

Table 2-3. Handlooms employed in 1776 in the selected parishes.<sup>44</sup>

Peebles remained dormant in the first half of the nineteenth century, while the other parishes forged ahead, mainly because “the upper Tweed valley was a remote area well removed from the main routes through the Borders to Edinburgh and the Forth, and south into England.”<sup>45</sup> Peebles was not directly linked to Edinburgh by turnpike roads until after 1770,<sup>46</sup> and it was also at some distance from the main communication routes into England. Conversely, the other

<sup>42</sup> Figures for 1801, 1811, 1821 and 1831 appeared in the ‘Abstract of Answers and Returns’ under the Population Acts of those years. Figures for 1841 and 1851 are from the census returns.

<sup>43</sup> Note that although Loch mentions linen looms, there is no mention of cotton in any of the towns.

<sup>44</sup> Murray, *op.cit.*, (ref.12) p.2.

<sup>45</sup> C. Gulvin, *The Tweedmakers: a history of the Scottish fancy woollen industry 1600-1914* (Newton Abbot, 1973) p.43.

<sup>46</sup> Chambers, *op. cit.*, (ref.3) p.265. The first proposal for a turnpike road “from Peebles to the border of Midlothian, in the direction of Edinburgh,” was made in 1770.

Borders woollen towns were either on the principal route between Edinburgh and Carlisle, the present A7 road, or close to what is now the A68/A696, which led towards Newcastle and north-east England (Fig.2-5). This gave them a trading advantage over Peebles, despite the fact that these routes were generally of very poor quality until the turnpikes were built.

Apart from James Chambers who, as we saw earlier, had upwards of a hundred cotton looms in his employ, I have only found one other Peebles textile entrepreneur in the first half of the nineteenth century. This was Arthur Dickson, who tenanted the waulk mill in the 1830s (see Chapter 10). Even if Chambers had not been bankrupted because of his inability to collect the debts owed to him, his business would have declined in the longer term because the weaving of cotton was mechanised in the late 1830s and the 1840s. "By 1839 there were 192 cotton mills in Scotland employing 31,000 workers. All but 17 were located in Renfrew and Lanark, and 98 were in or near Glasgow."<sup>47</sup> Despite the fact that a majority of Scottish cotton workers still worked at home or in small workshops, their days were numbered.<sup>48</sup> Although the 1841 Census recorded 60 cotton weavers in Peebles, this number had fallen to 14 by 1851 (see Appendix 3).

Hawick had begun to specialise in woollen hosiery after Baillie Hardie introduced frame knitting in 1771, with the result that "William Wilson produced 50,000 pairs of hose in 1813, and there were several like him."<sup>49</sup> In Galashiels, the Parish Minister, the Rev. Dr Douglas, encouraged the cloth makers by lending them £1,000 in 1791 to establish a Cloth Hall, in an attempt to make the town a marketing centre.<sup>50</sup> These clothiers were very active, as can be seen from the records of the Board of Trustees for Manufactures, and they included David Ballantyne, whose son and grandsons were later to play such an important role in the development of the industry in Peeblesshire. "Between 1791 and 1829 the Board distributed £4,744 to Scottish

<sup>47</sup> T.M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation 1700-2000* (London, 1999) p.157.

<sup>48</sup> W.H. Fraser and R.J. Morris, (eds.) *People and Society in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1990) p.207.

<sup>49</sup> Gulvin, *op.cit.*, (ref.45) p.41

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, p.62.

manufacturers, Galashiels clothiers taking £3,803, and the Borders as a whole £4,201.”<sup>51</sup> According to the returns made pursuant to the Population Act of 1831, there were 420 weavers or stocking knitters in Hawick, and nearly 150 in Galashiels. Although some of these weavers worked in cotton and linen, most of them were in wool. There were still only a few in Selkirk, which continued to specialise in the production of yarn.<sup>52</sup> We saw from Table 2-2 that the results of all this entrepreneurial activity are reflected in a great escalation in the population figures for Hawick after 1821, and of Selkirk, Galashiels and Melrose after 1831. On the other hand, the population of Peebles was relatively static. Although the burgh had 80 weavers in 1831, this was fewer than earlier in the century, when James Chambers alone controlled over 100 hand looms.

The development of textile manufacturing in Hawick, Galashiels and Melrose and yarn spinning in Selkirk had been made possible by “Scotland’s equally remarkable rate of general economic growth between 1760 and 1830.”<sup>53</sup> In this early stage of the Scottish Industrial Revolution, “there can be no doubt that in the vital ‘take-off’ phase textiles played a significant perhaps even a key role.”<sup>54</sup> The urbanisation and increasing prosperity of the Central Lowlands—especially in Edinburgh and Glasgow—provided a growing market for quality Borders tweeds and knitwear among the professional classes and the aristocracy. Although the lower end of the UK market was always dominated by cheap cloth from Yorkshire, the reputation for quality, and the influence of the widely-read novels of Sir Walter Scott, helped Borders tweeds to become increasingly popular in England as well as Scotland.

There is a contemporary assessment that attempted to explain the reasons why Peebles failed to develop any industry in the first half of the nineteenth century. The following appraisal

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<sup>51</sup> Gulvin, *op.cit.*, (ref.45) p.40.

<sup>52</sup> *Abstract of Answers and Returns* pp.1012-1031. There were also about 140 weavers in Wilton, a parish adjacent to Hawick; some of these were involved in carpet-making.

<sup>53</sup> Devine, *op.cit.*, (ref.47) p.156

<sup>54</sup> Murray, *op.cit.*, (ref.12) p.1.



appeared in 1851, the year when the possibility of a railway between Peebles and Edinburgh was again being discussed. "Peebles has not all the natural facilities to be a seat of manufacture which it is reputed to possess; and though twitted about its want of enterprise, actually labours under want of resources. Water is plentiful, but water-power is scanty, and is nearly all pre-engaged; coal is distant and dear; and communication with the coast and the great towns is expensive and slow."<sup>55</sup> Despite the efforts of the Town Council over many years to attract industry, poor communications and insufficient waterpower were the principal reasons why no woollen mills were established in Peebles before the arrival of the railway. Yet, this argument is not entirely convincing, for entrepreneurs in Hawick, Selkirk and Galashiels had managed to overcome similar restrictions. However, in 1857, two years after the opening of the Peebles Railway, the Council made a final effort by refurbishing the old corn mill and adding a large waterwheel to boost the power. Peebles was about to get its first modern woollen mill.

### **Peebles and the Scottish Cotton Industry.**

In 1776, there were 40 handloom weavers in Peebles, and, according to David Loch, they were all involved in producing coarse woollens. And yet, only 25 years later, we find that James Chambers was employing a hundred well-paid cotton weavers, whose output went to Glasgow merchants. How did this come about and why was it only a relatively short-lived phenomenon?

Despite the efforts of the woollen industry, during the second half of the eighteenth century cotton cloth greatly increased in popularity in Britain. Its appeal had begun with imports of cotton by the East India Company a century earlier, and "between 1780 and 1800 British raw cotton consumption virtually doubled."<sup>56</sup> The area in and around Glasgow became the centre of the Scottish industry. However, since cotton power looms were initially unsuitable for all but

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<sup>55</sup> *Fullarton's Topographical, Statistical and Historical Gazetteer* (Edinburgh, 1851) Vol.2, p. 495.

<sup>56</sup> M.E. Rose, *Firms, networks and business values: the British and American cotton industries since 1750* (Cambridge, 2000) p.22.

the coarsest cloths, as the demand for cotton goods increased, so did the number of handloom weavers producing the higher quality items.<sup>57</sup> Indeed, as the industry rapidly expanded, local handloom weavers in and around Glasgow were unable to keep up with the demand, and so there was a consequent geographical spread of 'outworkers' whose activities tended to be organised by middlemen. Many of these middlemen, such as James Chambers, "acted as agents of the manufacturers, co-ordinating the putting out system in return for commission on the delivery of finished goods."<sup>58</sup>

As the power loom continued to improve, "it was adopted by most cotton masters in the 1830s and 1840s, and, in one of the grimmest tragedies of the factory age, the handloom cotton weaver was slowly but inexorably squeezed out."<sup>59</sup> This is graphically demonstrated in Peebles, where Pigot's 1837 directory had noted that handloom weaving was already falling into decay in the town. Although there were sixty cotton weavers listed in the Peebles Census Enumerators' Books in 1841—most of whom had been born in the Parish—this number had fallen to three by the time of the 1861 Census (Appendix 3). Fortunately for the employment situation in Peebles, the arrival of the railway in 1855 was soon followed by the first of a number of woollen mills.

The establishment of the Peebles Railway Company was not the first attempt to provide a rail link between Peebles and Edinburgh, and in the following chapter we will look at a number of previous efforts that had failed.

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<sup>57</sup> It was not until the 1840s that power looms were successfully adapted for the finest work.

<sup>58</sup> Rose, *op.cit.*, (ref.56) p.27

<sup>59</sup> G.S. Pryde, *Central and Local Government in Scotland since 1707* (London, 1960) p.235.

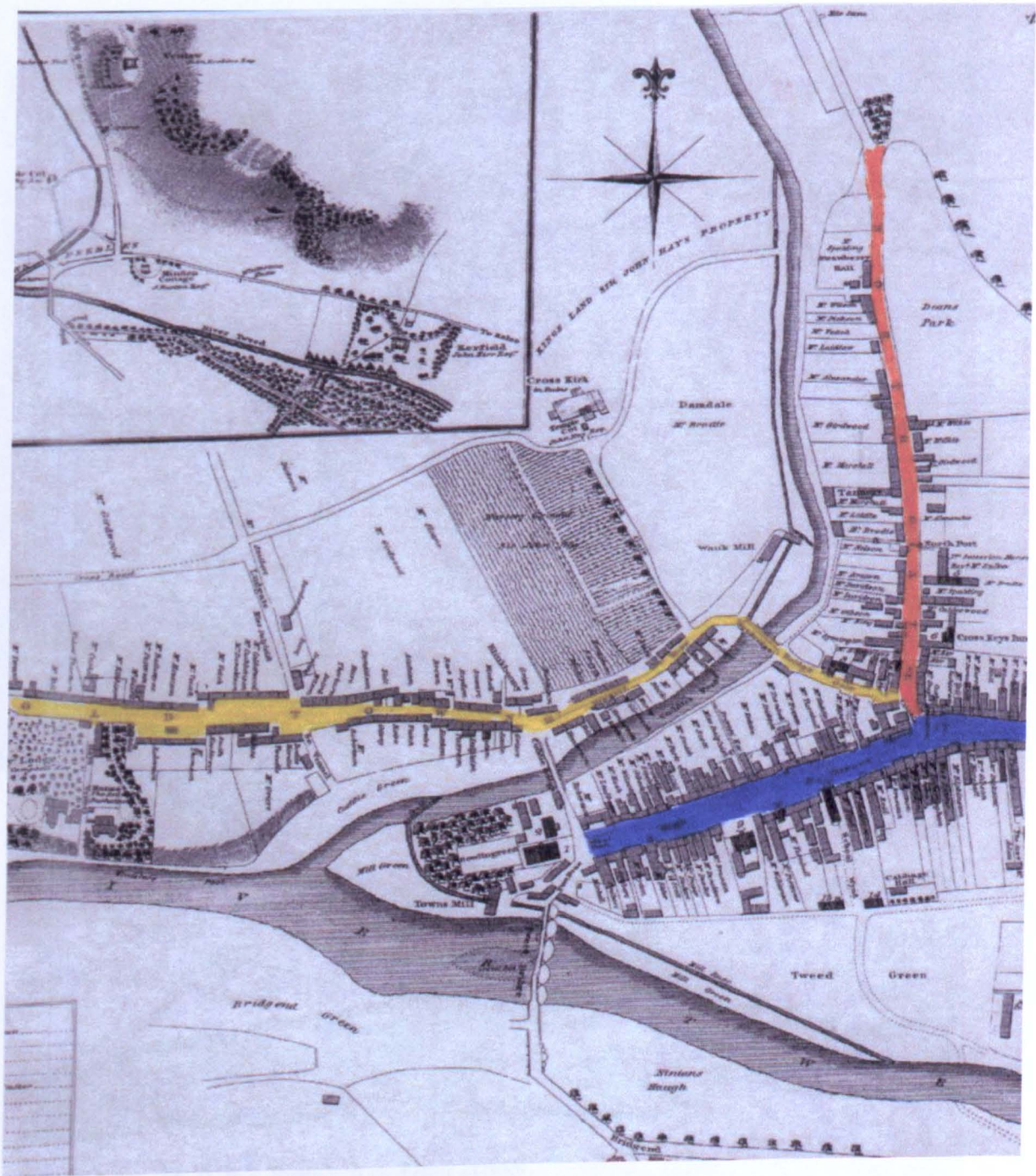


Fig.2-1. Part of John Wood's 1823 town plan of Peebles. Scale 12" = 1 mile



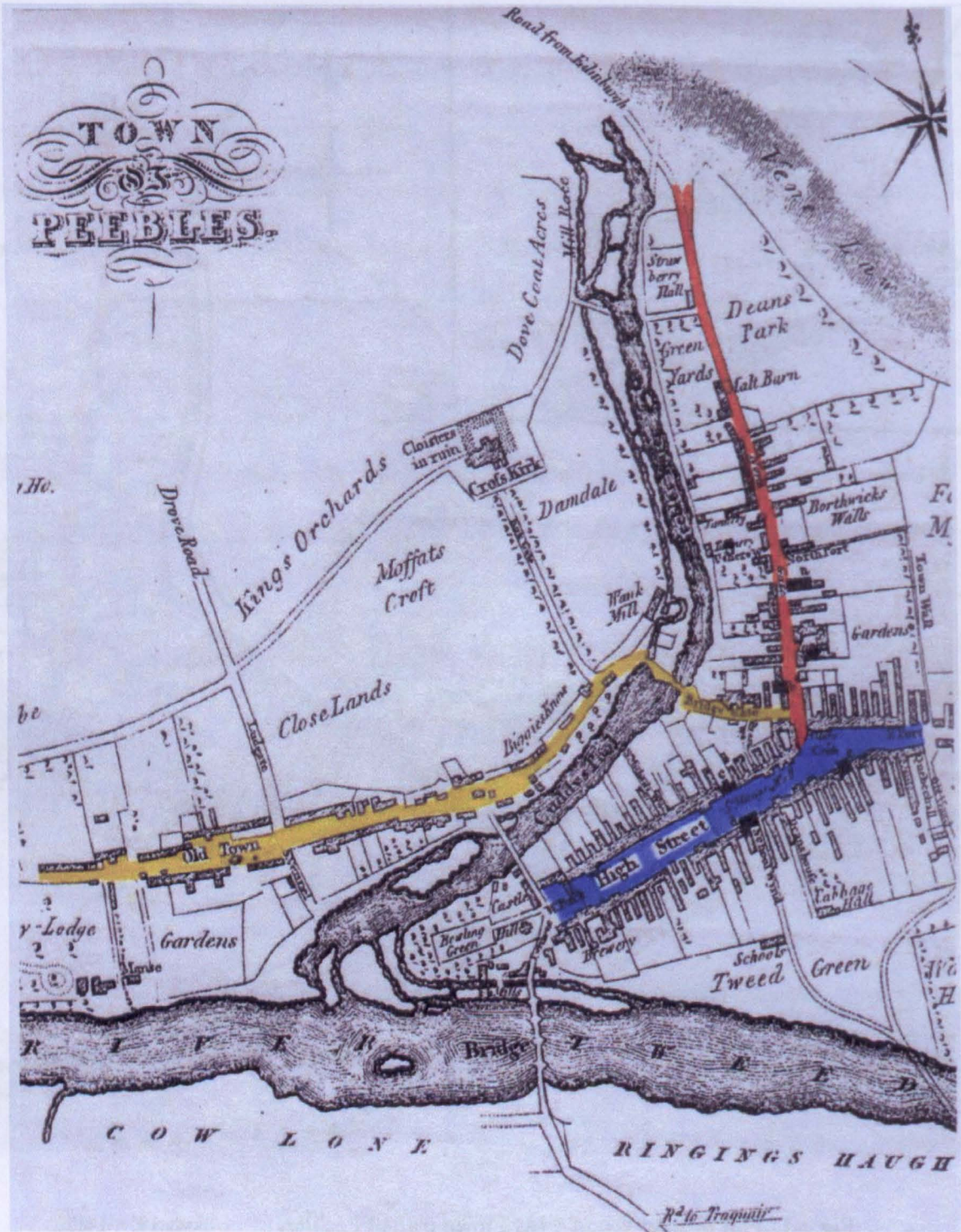


Fig.2-2. W.& A.K Johnston's 1847 Map of Peebles.

Scale 12" = 1 mile<sup>60</sup>

<sup>60</sup> This map was included in the submission for the Peebles Railway Act of Parliament.



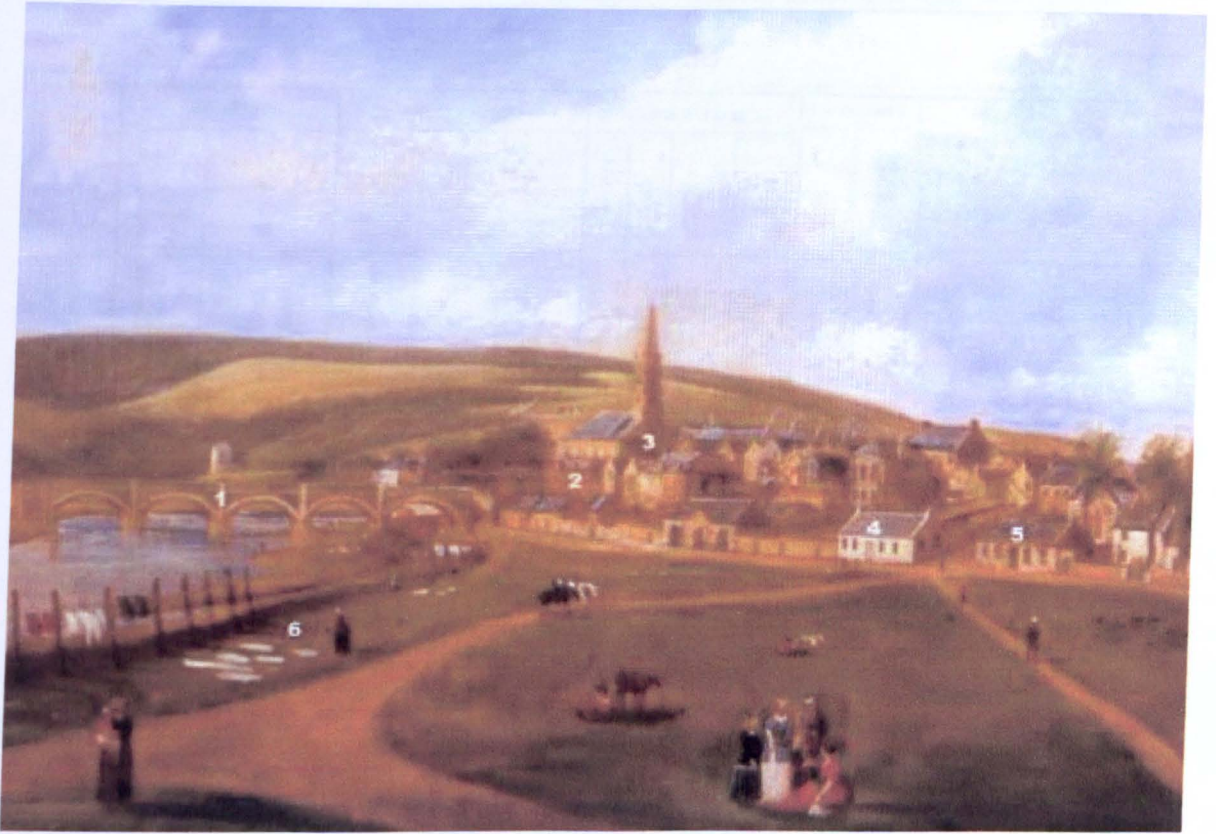


Fig.2-3. Tweed Green, Peebles, in 1836. *(painted by Charles Blyth)*.<sup>61</sup>

1. Tweed Bridge—widened in 1834.
2. Corn Mill—site of later woollen mill.
3. Old Parish Church—replaced in 1887.
4. Burgh or English School.
5. Grammar or Latin School.
6. Bleaching of linen webs.

<sup>61</sup> From the original painting in the Peebles Museum.

Shire of Peebles.

PARISH OR BURGH.	HOUSES				OCCUPATIONS.			PERSONS.		
	In- habited.	Families.	Buildings.	Uninhabited.	Families chiefly employed in Agriculture.	Families chiefly employed in Trade, Ma- nufactures, and Handicraft.	All other Families not com- prised in the two preceding Classes.	Males.	Females.	Total of Persons.
Broughton - - - - - Parish	49	51	-	-	13	15	23	154	145	299
Drumelzier - - - - - (*) Parish	42	42	-	2	26	8	8	107	110	217
Eddlestone - - - - - (*) Parish	144	144	3	-	80	29	35	439	397	836
Glenholm - - - - - Parish	48	50	-	-	30	7	13	127	132	259
Innerleithen (part of) - - - - - (*) Parish	138	150	1	2	51	33	66	357	389	746
Kilbucho - - - - - Parish	59	59	1	2	31	11	17	163	190	353
Kirkurd - - - - - Parish	58	58	-	1	31	10	17	161	157	318
Linton, West - - - - - (*) Parish	269	297	3	8	63	92	142	867	710	1,577
Lyne and Thiggate - - - - - Parish	25	26	1	-	20	2	4	83	73	156
Manor - - - - - (*) Parish	35	41	-	2	34	6	1	129	125	254
Newlands - - - - - Parish	186	205	-	11	100	38	58	522	555	1,078
PEEBLES (part of) (*) - - - - - Burgh & Parish	455	623	4	15	93	365	185	1,306	1,384	2,750
Skirling - - - - - Parish	61	64	-	1	22	17	25	172	181	353
Stobo - - - - - (*) Parish	66	85	-	3	41	8	36	212	227	440
Traquair - - - - - Parish	105	108	1	8	68	20	20	336	307	643
Tweedsmuir - - - - - Parish	49	49	-	3	24	5	20	145	143	288
	1,789	2,072	14	58	736	666	670	5,342	5,236	10,578

(\*) The Parishes of Drumelzier and Manor have decreased in Population (70 Persons each) attributed to the ruined state of Cottages and the enlargement of Farms.—(b) In 1821 the Return of the Parish of Eddlestone assigned 128 Families to the first, and only 4 to the third column of Occupations.—(c) The Parish of Innerleithen is partly in the Shire of Selkirk; the entire Parish contains 810 Inhabitants. A mineral Well, situate in this part of the Parish, together with improvements in Agriculture, have increased the Population (84 Persons).—

SHIRE OF PEEBLES.—MALES (Twenty Years of Age) employed in

SPECIFICATION:

Auctioneer or Appraiser, Sheriff's Broker - - - - - 1	Carpenter - - - - - 106	Earthenware, China, Pottery - - - - - 1
Baker, Gingerbread, Fancy - - - - - 15	Cabinet-maker - - - - - 6	Farrier, Cow-doctor, Cattle-doctor - - - - -
Barber, or Hair-dresser, Hair-dealer - - - - - 2	Wheelwrights - - - - - 2	Feather-dresser - - - - -
Basket-maker - - - - - 1	Sawyer - - - - - 7	Fellmonger - - - - -
Blacksmith, Horse-shoes - - - - - 55	Carrier, Cartier - - - - - 29	Fish-dealer - - - - - 1
Boat-builder, Ship-wright - - - - -	Carver and Gilder - - - - -	Fruiterer - - - - -
Bookbinder - - - - - 1	Caulker - - - - -	Furrier - - - - -
Bookseller or Vendor - - - - - 1	Cheesemonger - - - - -	
Brass-worker, Tinker - - - - - 1	Chemist and Druggist - - - - - 1	Glazier, Plumber - - - - - 1
Brewer - - - - - 6	Clock and Watch-maker - - - - - 5	Glower - - - - -
Broker - - - - -	Clothier - - - - - 2	Grocer, Green-grocer - - - - - 7
Builder - - - - - 6	Linen-draper, Haberdasher - - - - - 5	Gun-maker - - - - -
Land-jobber - - - - -	Silk-mercier, or Dealer - - - - -	
Bricklayer - - - - -	Coachmaker - - - - -	Harness-maker, Collar-maker - - - - -
Brickmaker - - - - -	Coach-owner, Driver, Grooms, &c. - - - - - 20	Hatter and Hosier - - - - -
Line Burner - - - - -	Coal-merchant, Fuel - - - - -	Horse-dealer, Stable, Hackney-Coach, or Fly-hopper - - - - -
Plasterer - - - - - 4	Cooper - - - - - 7	Huckster, Hawker, Pedlar, Duffer - - - - - 7
Slater - - - - - 7	Copperplate-printer, Engraver - - - - -	
Mason or Waller - - - - - 125	Corn-dealer - - - - - 2	
House-painter - - - - - 4	Currier - - - - -	
Butcher, Flesher - - - - - 15	Cutler - - - - -	
	Drysalter, Colouring Materials - - - - -	Ironfounder - - - - -
	Dyer - - - - - 5	Ironmonger - - - - - 3

\* The County of Peebles contains about 170 Males upwards of Twenty Years of Age, who are employed in weaving to this kind of Occupation; at Linton 47 Men are employed in weaving Cotton, at Innerleithen

Fig.2-4. The 1831 Population Act—Peeblesshire Population Statistics.<sup>62</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Courtesy of the Borders Council Archives, Selkirk

M.DCCC.XXXI.]

THE POPULATION ACT, 11 GEO. IV. C. 30.

1013

## Shire of Peebles.

Males Twenty Years of Age.	AGRICULTURE.			Employed in Manu- facture, or in making Manufac- turing Machinery.	Employed in Retail Trade, or in Handicraft as Masters or Workmen.	Capitalists, Bankers, Protes- sional and other Educated Men.	Labourers employed in Labour not Agri- cultural.	Other Males 20 Years of Age (except Servants.)	Male Servants.		Female Ser- vants.	PARISHES OR BURGH.
	Occupiers employing Labourers.	Occupiers not employing Labourers.	Labourers employed in Agriculture.						20 Years of Age.	Under 20 Years.		
76	7	6	14	3	16	2	20	8	—	—	32	BROUGHTON
55	3	1	31	—	12	2	—	1	—	—	27	Drumelzier
185	20	11	88	4	45	4	5	6	2	4	92	Eddlestone
63	5	4	28	—	13	1	—	11	1	1	31	Glenholm
177	10	—	68	12	49	4	26	2	6	1	33	Innerleithen
86	18	1	35	5	13	4	7	1	2	—	51	Kilbucho
77	11	6	32	—	17	4	4	3	—	—	33	Kirkurd
484	26	14	63	47	105	9	206	14	—	—	64	Linton, West
50	3	1	26	—	5	3	6	6	—	—	15	Lyne, &c.
62	11	—	34	—	9	3	4	1	—	—	35	Manor
251	23	12	109	5	55	12	23	7	5	2	98	Newlands
681	27	3	100	80	262	30	97	65	8	4	141	PEEBLES
86	12	5	18	8	26	3	9	5	—	—	26	Skirling
114	12	—	77	—	16	—	9	—	—	—	38	Stobo
162	15	3	67	—	28	9	34	1	5	3	60	Traquair
66	8	12	18	—	13	2	10	3	—	—	21	Tweedsmuir
2,075	213	70	808	*173	684	92	460	134	29	15	797	

(4) The increase of Population in the Parish of West Linton (383 Persons) is attributed to a new line of Road now forming, on which 183 Men are employed. — (\*) A small part of the Parish of Peebles (containing 4 Inhabitants in 1821) is in the Shire of Selkirk, but the Population is

now wholly entered here. Most of the Labourers not Agricultural are employed on the public Roads. — (†) In 1821 the Return of the Parish of Stobo assigned only 8 Families to the first and 57 to the third column of Occupations.

## Retail Trade, or in Handicraft, as Masters or Workmen.

## SPECIFICATION :

Jeweller	-	-	-	-	-	Printer	-	-	-	-	-	Tea-dealer	-	-	-	-	-
Lace-dealer	-	-	-	-	-	Printseller	-	-	-	-	-	Tinman	-	-	-	-	-
Maltster	-	-	-	-	-	Publican, Hotel or Innkeeper, Re-	-	-	-	-	-	Tobacconist	-	-	-	-	-
Marble-cutter, Statuary	-	-	-	-	-	tailor of Beer	-	-	-	-	-	Toyman	-	-	-	-	-
Milkman, Cowkeeper	-	-	-	-	1							Turner	-	-	-	-	-
Miller	-	-	-	-	34	Rope-maker	-	-	-	-	1	Undertaker of Funerals	-	-	-	-	-
Nailor	-	-	-	-	6	Saddler	-	-	-	-	3	Upholsterer	-	-	-	-	-
Nightman, Scavenger	-	-	-	-	1	Shoe and Boot-maker, or Mender	-	-	-	-	74	Wharfinger	-	-	-	-	-
Old Clothes-dealer, Rag-dealer	-	-	-	-	-	Shop-keeper { Dealer in sundry neces- sary Articles, such as are sold in a Village Shop }	-	-	-	-	18	Whitesmith	-	-	-	-	1
Optician	-	-	-	-	-	Skinner	-	-	-	-	5	Wine-dealer	-	-	-	-	-
Paper-maker	-	-	-	-	-	Soot, and Chimney Sweeper	-	-	-	-	-						
Pastry-cook, Confectioner	-	-	-	-	-	Spirit-merchant, Spirit Shop	-	-	-	-	1						
Patten-maker	-	-	-	-	-	Stationer	-	-	-	-	-	Defective Specification	-	-	-	-	-
Pawnbroker	-	-	-	-	-	Stock-broker	-	-	-	-	-						
Poulterer	-	-	-	-	-	Straw-plait and Bonnets	-	-	-	-	-						
						Tailor, Breeches-maker	-	-	-	-	55						
						Tallow-chandler, Wax-chandler	-	-	-	-	-						
						Tanner	-	-	-	-	3						
												TOTAL employed in Retail Trade or in Handicraft				684	

various materials. Cotton, Flax and Wool; at the Town of Peebles, where 80 Men are so employed, Hosiery is added are 12 Weavers of Woollen, and about 40 in various places appear to be Weavers for household use.

Fig.2-4. The 1831 Population Act continued



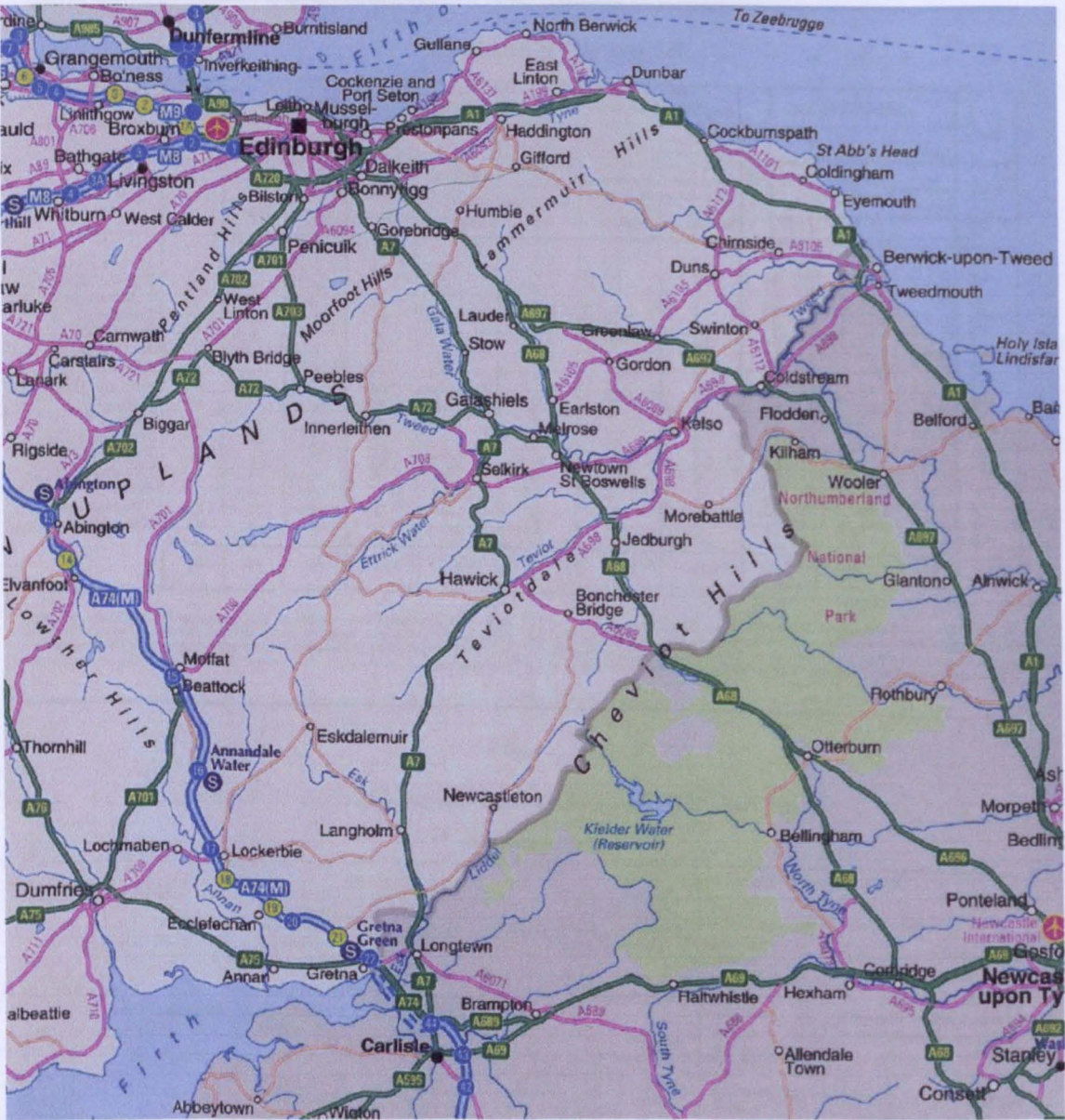


Fig.2-5. Road routes of the Scottish Borders .<sup>63</sup> Scale 1 inch = 20 miles

<sup>63</sup> The network of roads in the Borders has not seen a great change over the last 300 years. However, the vital turnpike road from Peebles towards Edinburgh—fore-runner of the modern A703—was not built until the 1770s.  
(Section of map published 2003 by *The Scotsman* newspaper.)



### ABORTIVE RAILWAY PROPOSALS FOR PEEBLES

The opening of the North British Railway (NBR) line between Berwick and Edinburgh in 1846, the inauguration of the Caledonian Railway (CR) route between Carlisle and Edinburgh in 1848, and the completion of the NBR line from Edinburgh to Hawick in 1849, left Peebles increasingly isolated. According to Buchan, Peeblesshire was the only Scottish County south of the River Tay without a railway at this time.<sup>1</sup> However, as can be seen from Fig.3-1, Kirkcudbrightshire and Wigtownshire in south-west Scotland were similarly deprived. But, prior to the passing of the Peebles Railway Act of 1853, there had already been a number of attempts to link Peebles into the Scottish railway system.

The earliest proposal to build a railway through Peebles was by Thomas Telford in 1812, for a horse-drawn tramway linking Glasgow to Berwick upon Tweed by way of the Tweed Valley.<sup>2</sup> In 1833, and again in 1836, there were proposals to join Newcastle to Edinburgh and Glasgow via an inland route passing through Jedburgh, the Tweed Valley and Peebles.<sup>3</sup> The 1836 proposal caused some anxiety to the promoters of the railway between Edinburgh and Dunbar—which became the NBR in 1842—who had already set their sights on continuing the Dunbar line as far as Berwick upon Tweed. They therefore commissioned George Stephenson to report on the viability of the 1836 Tweed Valley route, and were happy with his conclusion that it was not feasible.<sup>4</sup> Apart from the enormous cost, the gradients were too steep for the currently available locomotives, and, in fact, nothing more was heard of this proposal.

In 1840 a Royal Commission was set up to consider the provision of railway services linking England and Scotland (see Chapter 8). Before its report the following year, William Turnbull of

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<sup>1</sup> J.W. Buchan, (ed.) *A History of Peeblesshire* (Glasgow, 1925), Vol.1, p.117.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, Vol.1, p.115.

<sup>3</sup> C.J.A. Robertson, *The Origins of the Scottish Railway System: 1722-1844* (Edinburgh, 1983) p.271.

<sup>4</sup> J. Hurst, *The Glencorse Branch* (Usk, 1999) p.13.

the Stamp Office in Peebles and John Rooke of Wigton, near Carlisle, promoted the so-called National Railway of Scotland, which proposed to build a line from Lancaster to Peebles via Carlisle.<sup>5</sup> From Peebles the railway would continue on to Edinburgh and Glasgow. This £4,000,000 scheme did not get beyond the issue of a prospectus, even though there had been an adroit manipulation of costs and route lengths in order to make it appealing to investors.

In 1845, the NBR included a branch line to Peebles from near Galashiels on its proposed Edinburgh-Hawick line, with a possible continuation from Peebles to Edinburgh. However, the estimated cost of £20,000 per mile was too high in relation to the expected traffic,<sup>6</sup> and the NBR removed the relevant clauses from its Railway Bill then going through Parliament. This was a considerable setback for the inhabitants of Peebles and a blow to their civic pride. A second project in 1845 was the proposed Caledonian Extension Railway running from Ayr to Berwick upon Tweed via Peebles and Galashiels: put forward before the CR had even begun construction of its Carlisle to Glasgow and Edinburgh lines. This project broke new ground in that it was an incursion into the territory held by a rival railway company, the NBR. Although it fell a victim in the aftermath of the Railway Mania of 1845-46, the Caledonian Extension proposal helps to explain the CR and NBR confrontations in Peeblesshire two decades later (Chapter 8).

The 1845 Caledonian Extension scheme had offered Peebles direct links to both Glasgow and Galashiels. As a result, an independent company—the Edinburgh & Peebles Railway (E&PR)—had been formed to construct a double-track line from Edinburgh, which would complete the system of railway connections to Peebles. It had a capital of £250,000, and, in the midst of the Railway Mania, its shares were over-subscribed by a factor of three.<sup>7</sup> William Chambers was an active member of the Provisional Committee, and Convener of its

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<sup>5</sup> J. Thomas, *A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain, Volume 6 SCOTLAND The Lowlands and the Borders* (Newton Abbot 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1984) pp.26-7.

<sup>6</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (P.Adv.) 1/10/1853.

<sup>7</sup> Buchan, *op. cit.*, (ref 1) Vol.1, p.116.

Management Sub-committee.<sup>8</sup> As Solicitor to the Bill, John Bathgate was directly involved, and he was also the owner of the local newspaper, the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, which produced a series of editorials strongly supporting the project. The Company Chairman was Sir Graham Montgomery Bart., who owned large estates in Peeblesshire that would benefit from the proposed railways. Other members included Baillie John Stirling and ex-Provost Walter Thorburn of Peebles. We shall meet these personalities later, both during and after the successful launch of the Peebles Railway Company (PRC).

From the NBR line near Musselburgh, the E&PR was to run west of Loanhead and Roslin to Penicuik, and thence via Leadburn and Eddleston to Peebles (Fig.3-2). From Leadburn there was to be a branch to [West] Linton. This route avoided the expense of building a terminus in Edinburgh, and Chambers and his Sub-committee negotiated a deal with the NBR to work the line, once it was completed. But, due to the high estimated costs of the line, panic after the collapse of many railway projects in 1846-7, and doubts about the terms of the NBR leasing agreement, the E&PR Bill was withdrawn from Parliament and the company wound up.<sup>9</sup>

In any case, since less than one fifth of the shares had been subscribed locally, this would have been unacceptable to Parliament, since local support for railway bills was obligatory. To confirm the level of this support, full details of all subscribers were required by Standing Orders (see Appendix 5, Nos. 34, 35, 36 and 53). However, the men mainly responsible for the success of the Peebles Railway a decade later gained invaluable experience during this project, both in the practicalities of creating a railway and also of working together as a team.

We shall see in Chapter 4 how the PRC was successfully promoted in 1853, with the commencement of operations in 1855. By 1866, Peebles had also gained connections to

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<sup>8</sup> *P.Adv. op.cit.*, (ref.6) 7/10/1845.

<sup>9</sup> *Railway Times* 23/5/1846. The Bill had already been read a second time when a meeting in Edinburgh of potential shareholders voted by a majority of over 2 to 1 not to proceed further.

Glasgow via the CR, and to Galashiels via the NBR. But there was also an intriguing project that had been put forward in 1865, and reported in the *Advertiser*, for another railway that would have had a considerable impact upon the Royal Burgh.<sup>10</sup> The article was copied from a story that had appeared in *The Observer*, and gave details of the 'Imperial Railway of Great Britain' which would link Peebles with London, Glasgow and Edinburgh by a high-speed, double-track, broad-gauge railway. A search on the Internet revealed that the London School of Economics library possesses a 23-page booklet about this railway, written by an anonymous author whose initials were M.A.<sup>11</sup> Having received a photocopy of this document, it was obvious to me that the original *Observer* article had been taken verbatim from the booklet, which had aroused sufficient interest to require a second edition.

The thinking behind the project—which was put forward during the 1864-1866 boom in railway construction<sup>12</sup>—was that the existing trunk lines in Britain were incapable of utilising high-speed express passenger trains in safety. This was because of the large number of stations, the narrowness of the standard gauge of 4ft 8½ in., and the proliferation of slow goods trains. Freight traffic revenues had recently begun to exceed those due to passengers.<sup>13</sup>

The plan was to construct three separate lines—London to Dover for the Continent; London to Holyhead for Ireland; London to Edinburgh and Glasgow for Scottish traffic. The construction estimate was £35,000 per mile. The total cost, including engines, rolling stock and contingencies, would amount to £30,000,000. "The Imperial Railway will be reserved exclusively for the rapid transmission of passengers and light parcels, and of Her Majesty's mails and troops; and on it no accommodation will be provided for any other kind of traffic."<sup>14</sup>

<sup>10</sup> *P.Adv.*, .*op.cit.*, (ref.6) 7/10/1865.

<sup>11</sup> M.A. *The Imperial Railway of Great Britain and Railway Reform* (Oxford and London, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1865).

<sup>12</sup> M. Robbins, *The Railway Age* (London, 1962) p.38.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, pp.6-7.

<sup>14</sup> M.A., *op. cit.*, (ref. 11) p.4.

To enable average speeds of 60 mph (including stops), the three railways would be constructed on a 7-foot gauge, and, with few intermediate stations, they would avoid built-up areas as much as possible. The London to Edinburgh section would have only four intermediate stations; Nottingham, Leeds, Carlisle and Peebles, “from which a branch would extend to Glasgow.”<sup>15</sup> The journey time from London to Edinburgh (380 miles) would be 6h.20m., and to Glasgow (405 miles), 6h.45m. There would be not less than six trains daily in each direction, but none on Sundays in deference to the Sabbatarians.

The pamphlet’s author calculated that although a broad gauge railway would cost about 10 per cent more to construct than a normal standard gauge line, its carrying capacity would be at least three times greater. Without the overhanging weight of standard-gauge engines which causes a “rolling and unsteady motion [that] rapidly destroys the rails and road,”<sup>16</sup> and without the large numbers of points normally required, track maintenance costs and working expenses would be low. The allowance to be made for working expenses was 40 per cent of revenue, compared to the Peebles Railway expenses that were rarely less than 50 per cent.<sup>17</sup>

Another feature of the Imperial Railway was the simple, low-fare structure, “and the adoption of an unvarying but remunerative charge for long distances irrespective of actual mileage.”<sup>18</sup> There would be no return or excursion tickets. The fare from London to Nottingham was to be 12s. first-class and 8s. second-class. The same fare would apply between any one station and the next, except, presumably, between Peebles and Edinburgh or Glasgow where such a fare would be uncompetitive. Between London and all other stations than Nottingham, there would be a standard fare of £1 first class and 15s. second class, and this rate would apply for travel over any two or more stages. There would be no third class, as the average second-class fare would

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<sup>15</sup> M.A., *op. cit.*, (ref. 11) p.4.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid* p.21.

<sup>17</sup> PRC Minute Books, 1855-60. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2 and 3).

<sup>18</sup> M.A., *op. cit.*, (ref. 11) p.7.

be less than the penny a mile of the 'Parliamentary' trains required by Gladstone's 1844 Act. In 1865, the current first-class fare from London to Edinburgh or Glasgow was £3.10s., and the fastest train averaged only 39½ m.p.h.<sup>19</sup>

The Imperial Railway's offer of high speeds, safety and low fares would therefore be very attractive to prospective passengers. Despite the low fare structure, the author went on to show that a train only half full (carrying 52 first class and 64 second class passengers between London and Edinburgh) would generate a profit of £50.<sup>20</sup> In a further series of calculations, he claimed that the Imperial Railway would be able to pay a fixed dividend of 5 per cent, and still retain a surplus that could be used to build further extensions, such as lines from Carlisle to Portpatrick and Stirling to Aberdeen.<sup>21</sup>

To avoid the possibility of speculation or questionable dealings by directors such as George Hudson,<sup>22</sup> the senior director for each section of the railway, "who will have the chief control, will be appointed by the Government. The accounts will be audited by responsible public officers."<sup>23</sup> Apart from adding credibility to the project, Government support was also important from another aspect, since by the 1846 Gauge Regulation Act (9 & 10 Vict., c.57), no new broad-gauge railways were to be constructed without special Parliamentary sanction. To find out what happened to the Imperial Railway proposal will require further research.

We shall look at the promotion of the successful Peebles Railway Company—which received its Act of Parliament in 1853—in the following chapter, together the activities of its Secretary and Solicitor, John Bathgate.

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<sup>19</sup> M.A. *op. cit.*, (ref. 11) p.22.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, p.8.

<sup>22</sup> D. Mountfield, *The Railway Barons* (London, 1979) pp.41-74. Provides a summary the rise and fall of George Hudson, known in the the 1830s and 1840s as the 'Railway King'.

<sup>23</sup> M.A. *op. cit.*, (ref. 11) p.6.

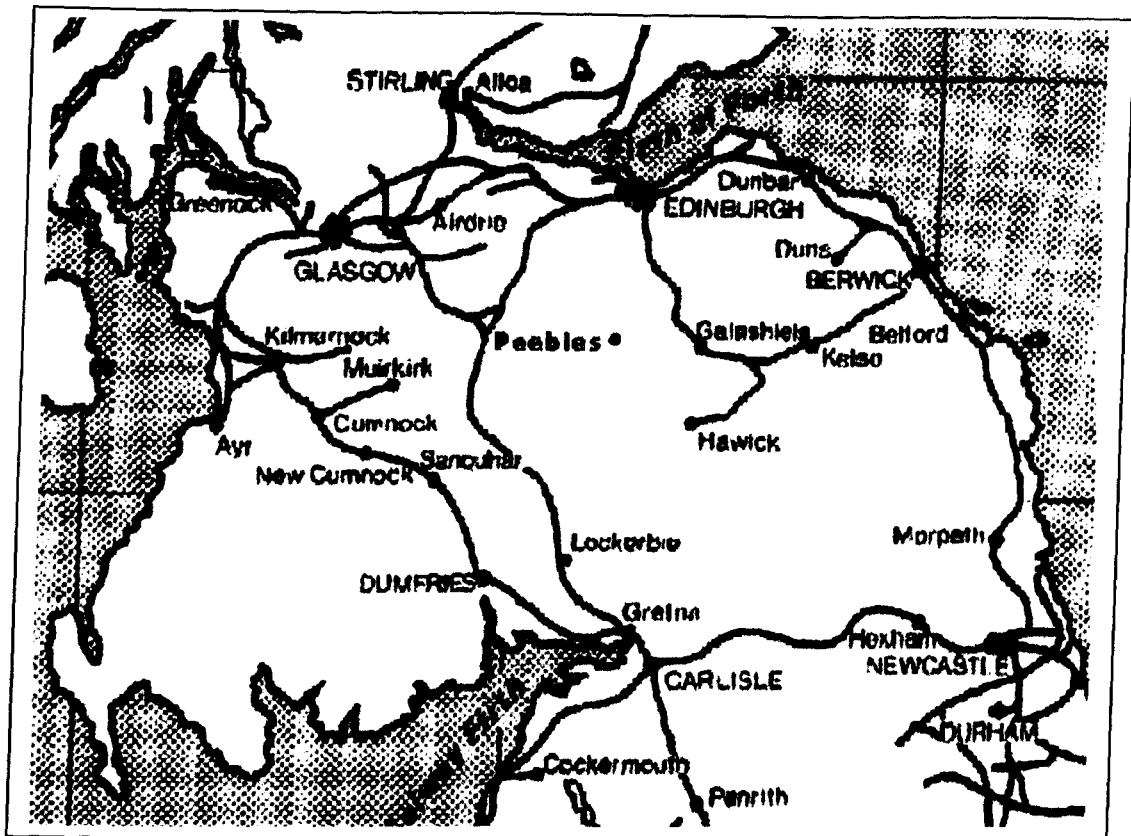


Fig.3-1. The railways of southern Scotland in 1851, showing the isolation of Peebles.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Adapted from Fernyhough, F., *The History of Railways in Britain* (Reading, 1975) p.8.

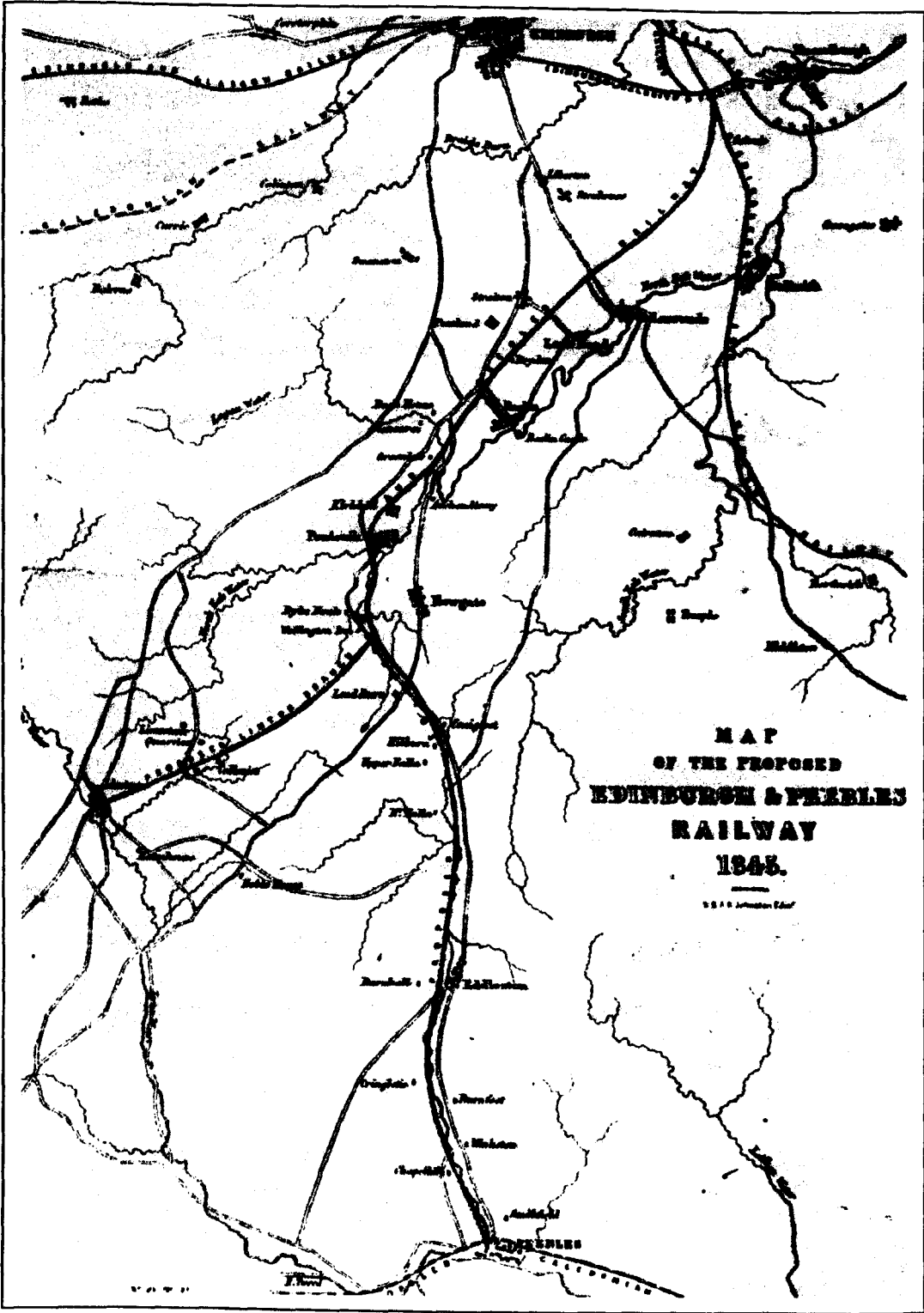


Fig.3-2. Proposed route of the abortive Edinburgh & Peebles Railway, 1845.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> This map was published in the November 1845 issue of the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*.



## JOHN BATHGATE—LAWYER AND RAILWAY PROMOTER

**Mr Bathgate has taken all the trouble of secretary and practical manager ungrudgingly, freely, gratuitously, having in fact declined to accept of anything for his valuable services—a circumstance which shows that lawyers are not all the hard-hearted wretches they are frequently imagined to be.**<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

The legal profession played a crucial part in the promotion of railways in nineteenth-century Britain, but case histories are rarely found in academic railway studies. According to Kellett, the published work on Victorian railways lacked “the study of the solicitor as entrepreneur,”<sup>2</sup> despite the fact that he believed that this could be of absorbing interest. To some extent this gap has since been filled by Kostal in his review of English law, the legal profession and the railway companies during the period 1825 to 1875, although he does not mention Scottish railways.<sup>3</sup> Kostal’s review pursues two main themes: that lawyers in general had a negative effect on the development of steam railways, and that the legal profession was itself re-shaped in the process.

However, the railway literature makes few mentions of solicitors by name, and these references tend to be lacking in details. Examples include Robert Baxter, who did outstanding work for the Great Northern Railway,<sup>4</sup> George Pritt in connection with the Liverpool & Manchester Railway,<sup>5</sup> and the firm of Nicholson, Hett and Fraser for the Great Grimsby & Sheffield Junction Railway.<sup>6</sup> McGregor draws attention to the papers of N.B. MacKenzie, solicitor for the West Highland Railway, which bring out some of the practical aspects of railway

<sup>1</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (P.Adv.) (20/12/1862) Speech of William Chambers, Chairman of the Peebles Railway Company, at the “Bathgate Testimonial Meeting”, promoted by the Company Directors.

<sup>2</sup> J.R. Kellett, *The Impact of Railways on Victorian Cities* (London, 1969) p.423.

<sup>3</sup> R.W. Kostal, *Law and English Railway Capitalism, 1825-1875* (Oxford, 1994).

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, pp.325-33. Baxter’s firm was well rewarded: it received £179,739 for services over two years.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, pp.16 & 360.

<sup>6</sup> J. Simmons, *The Railway in Town and Country, 1830-1914* (Newton Abbot, 1986). p.309-10.

promotion, but he does not pursue this topic in depth.<sup>7</sup> Clark provides slightly more comprehensive information on a Glasgow solicitor, James Keyden, who was the Secretary of the Greenock & Wemyss Bay Railway. In Clark's opinion, this railway's success "was largely due to its energetic secretary,"<sup>8</sup> so here is one case at least where a solicitor seems to have exerted a positive influence.

Given this background, it is pertinent to consider the career of John Bathgate, Secretary of the Peebles Railway Company (PRC). He practised as a solicitor between 1835 and 1863 in Peebles, a small Scottish county town, which during that period had a population of between two and three thousand. Like Keyden, Bathgate was not the negative legal influence as portrayed by Kostal. He was a key figure in the conception, formation and management of the Peebles Railway (PR), 19 miles in length, which began operations in 1855. It linked Peebles with Edinburgh (Fig.4-1), via Eskbank and a section of the North British Railway (NBR). The PRC remained independent and profitable for 21 years, until finally swallowed up by the NBR.

### Information Sources

Bathgate was a Writer (solicitor), Notary Public and Agent for the Union Bank of Scotland in Peebles. His name often occurs in the Minute Books of the PRC, of which he was Secretary from 1852 to 1863, and also of the Peebles Town Council, where he was a Councillor from 1850 until his appointment as Town Clerk in 1853. At the suggestion of William Chambers, printer and publisher of the eponymous *Edinburgh Journal, Encyclopaedia and Dictionary*, Bathgate had founded a local newspaper in 1845, the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*. One of the motives behind this venture might have been to use the *Advertiser* as a means of gaining local support for a contemporary railway proposal, the 1845 Edinburgh & Peebles Railway (Chapter 3), in which he and Chambers were heavily involved. Although Bathgate sold the newspaper in 1849, he

<sup>7</sup> J. McGregor, 'The Politics of Railway Promotion in the Scottish Highlands: the west Highland Mallaig extension', (Open University PhD thesis, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> A.J.C. Clark, *Caley to the Coast* (Usk, 2002) p.69.

nevertheless continued to receive frequent editorial mentions in it. The *Advertiser* also became a staunch supporter of the PRC before and after its incorporation. Sheila Scott's monograph on Bathgate is another important document, especially since "most of this account has been written by John Bathgate himself," in a memoir intended for his family.<sup>9</sup> From these various sources we are able to obtain a clear picture of the role of an exemplary solicitor in the promotion and management of a rural branch line.

### **Renewed Discussions about a new Peebles Railway**

We saw in the previous chapter that there had been a number of unsuccessful attempts to connect Peebles with Edinburgh, the most important of which was the proposed Edinburgh & Peebles Railway (E&PR) of 1845. In November 1851, Bathgate met with William Chambers, a native of Peebles who had bought the nearby Glenormiston estate in 1849, and Walter Thorburn, who was a banker and a Peebles textile merchant. According to the author of the Thorburn family history, Walter had also been involved in the 1845 Caledonian Extension proposal. Together, the three men discussed the prerequisites for a viable railway between Peebles and Edinburgh that could find sufficient local backing, from both the financial and traffic viewpoints, to satisfy Parliamentary requirements for private railway bills. Having learned the lessons from the abortive E&PR scheme, they agreed that no unnecessary expenses and strict cost controls were the primary considerations for any new attempt, in order "to confine the enterprise within such pecuniary limits as were likely to be attainable within the district."<sup>10</sup> Their timing was propitious, since the financial situation for local landowners had recently improved. After 1846, Scottish agriculture had begun a period of prosperity that was to last for a quarter of a century,<sup>11</sup> while the recent fall in bank rate meant that railway securities had become more attractive.<sup>12</sup> It would also be cheaper for a railway company to borrow money, if the need arose.

<sup>9</sup> S.A. Scott, *John Bathgate: a sketch of his life and times* (Peebles, 1977). p.1.

<sup>10</sup> W. Chambers, *History of Peeblesshire*. (Edinburgh, 1864) p.278.

<sup>11</sup> W.C. Dickinson and G.S. Pryde, *Scotland from 1603 to the present day* (London, 1962) p.226.

<sup>12</sup> H. Pollins, *Britain's Railways: an industrial history* (Newton Abbot, 1971) p.45. Interest rates fell from 5.2% in 1847 to 1.7% in 1852. (Source: [www.eh.net/hmit/interest\\_rate/](http://www.eh.net/hmit/interest_rate/)).

Four decisions followed from this meeting. (1) The proposed railway should be operated at modest speeds on a single track. (2) The expense of building a station in Edinburgh should be avoided by terminating the railway at Eskbank, eight miles from Edinburgh on the Hawick branch of the NBR (Fig.4-1). (3) The line should pass close to the collieries in Rosewell, the limestone quarries near Mount Lothian and the paper mills in Penicuik, so as to generate a substantial amount of freight as well as passenger traffic. (4) Bathgate should contact Thomas Bouch—a consulting civil engineer in Edinburgh who was gaining a reputation for building cheap branch lines—to establish the viability of the proposed route. Bathgate and Chambers had already made an exploratory visit to the railway being built by Bouch at St. Andrews, the first of the Scottish lines to be constructed on the so-called 'Cheap Principle'.<sup>13</sup>

Having ridden over the proposed route, Bouch was satisfied that it could be carried out without the need for expensive bridges, embankments and cuttings, and that by taking care to go round the heads of fields, severance claims could be minimised.<sup>14</sup> Such claims arose when a railway line cut off part of a field, so as to render it virtually useless for agricultural purposes.<sup>15</sup> As a result of these assurances, Bathgate began to sound out the landowners along the route, a crucial stage of discussion and conciliation before the introduction of a railway bill in Parliament. He also held preliminary discussions with the NBR Board about the necessary arrangements for linking the proposed Peebles Railway with their Edinburgh-Hawick line. These included such things as the details of revenue sharing, specifications for rails, points and signalling, and the necessity for prior agreement on the wording of references to the NBR in any railway bill.

Before the formation of the County Council in 1889, Peeblesshire was administered by a number of local landowners, who formed a committee known as the Commissioners of Supply. The same people were Trustees for the County's Turnpike and Statute Labour Roads, and some

<sup>13</sup> C.J.A.Robertson, C.J.A., 'The Cheap Railway Movement in Scotland: the St Andrews Railway', *JTH*, Vol.7, No.1, 1974.

<sup>14</sup> W. Chambers, *Peebles and its Neighbourhood with a Run on Peebles Railway*, (Edinburgh, 1856 ) p.8.

of them were also Heritors of Peebles Parish Church.<sup>16</sup> Bathgate was well known to them all, for, apart from his successful business as a solicitor, he was Clerk to all three of these bodies. Over the years, he had caused several surveys to be made of the traffic on the turnpikes, and with this intimate knowledge he was well placed to make an accurate assessment of the potential revenue for the railway. Bathgate's figure of £10,000 per year was unlikely to be seriously challenged by critics of the proposed railway, although there were the inevitable sceptics who condemned it as "a foolish scheme of Bathgate's."<sup>17</sup>

As a result of all this preliminary work, it was with confidence that Bathgate, Chambers and Thorburn called a meeting, by private circular, of "Noblemen and Gentlemen connected with the County of Peebles and others," to promote the idea of a railway built mainly by local finance.<sup>18</sup> At this meeting held in Peebles on Tuesday, 13 April 1852, before an audience of local landowners, the Provost and Magistrates of Peebles and other prominent citizens, Bathgate began by making a statement "in regard to the general features of the projected railway." Great emphasis was laid on the principles of economic construction that formed the core of this proposal, and on the potential traffic revenues and dividends. Bouch then followed by giving an indication of the probable costs.

### **Formation of the Peebles Railway Company**

According to the first entry in the PRC Minute Book, this joint presentation was received with great enthusiasm, and a motion by Lord Elibank that "It is therefore highly desirable and expedient that a Railway be established betwixt Peebles and Edinburgh", seconded by the Earl of Traquair, was carried unanimously. A Provisional Committee that included Chambers and Thorburn was then formed, with Sir Graham Montgomery as Chairman and John Bathgate as

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<sup>15</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.6) pp.303-4.

<sup>16</sup> J.W. Buchan, (ed.), *A.History of Peeblesshire*, (Glasgow, 1925) Vol.1, pp.102-3.

<sup>17</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) (20/12/1862) Chambers' speech at Bathgate's Testimonial Dinner.

<sup>18</sup> PRC Minute Book, (PRM) 13/4/1852. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/1).

Interim Secretary. It was important when promoting a Victorian railway company to confer a degree of confidence among prospective investors by having members of the nobility and gentry on the Provisional Committee. The PRC did well on this score, as its Committee included an earl, a baron, four baronets, and a considerable number of landowners and farmers. Several members of this Committee had a private interest, as they stood to gain by selling land to the railway and by having the value of their estates increased once operations began. On a motion by local landowner William Allan, the committee was authorised “to obtain a survey of the line, enter into provisional agreements for land, and a provisional Contract for the Execution of the Work,” and all other necessary steps to carry the project forward.<sup>19</sup> A further motion by the financially-cautious Chambers was agreed; “That Mr Bouch the Engineer and Mr Bathgate the Interim Secretary, make no charges for professional services, unless the stock be afterwards taken up.” To this extent, Bouch and Bathgate were taking a financial risk.

In October 1852, Walter Thorburn, who had just been elected a Councillor for the second time, joined John Bathgate on Peebles Town Council. Another enthusiast for the railway was Baillie Robert Stirling,<sup>20</sup> the Burgh Treasurer, who was subsequently appointed an Auditor of the PRC. All three were active in promoting the railway within the Council. By this time, Stirling’s son, also Robert, was Editor and Publisher of the *Advertiser*, and he strongly backed the PRC in a series of articles on the potential benefits to Peebles. Civic pride was at also stake, for Stirling alleged in an editorial on 6 April 1852 that Peeblesshire was the only Scottish County south of the River Tay without a railway; an error repeated by Buchan 73 years later.<sup>21</sup>

The Council accepted the arguments that not only would the railway link Peebles with the capital of Scotland, but also that the greatly reduced carriage charges would considerably benefit the town and the surrounding neighbourhood. In a year when the ordinary revenue of the Burgh

<sup>19</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) 13/4/1862.

<sup>20</sup> A Baillie was the next senior magistrate to the Provost, equivalent to an Alderman in England.

<sup>21</sup> Buchan, *op.cit.*, (ref.16) Vol.1, p.117. Kircudbrightshire and Wigtownshire also lacked a railway.

only amounted to £453 16s. 9d., the Council agreed to subscribe for 50 of the £10 PRC shares.<sup>22</sup>

The same Council Minutes also record a unanimous vote of thanks “to Councillor Bathgate for his unwearied exertion, and pecuniary risk, in promoting the railway and carrying it through, so far at least as can be done by individual energy.” Upon being offered the part-time position of Town Clerk the following year, Bathgate resigned as a Councillor, but he continued to foster and maintain the warm relations between the PRC and the Council.

### **Tasks falling to the Company Secretary**

Meanwhile, the PRC had been incorporated in May 1852 with a capital of £70,000 in £10 shares, and a borrowing facility of £23,000. Bathgate was appointed Company Secretary at a salary of £150 per annum, and Solicitor for the Bill.<sup>23</sup> A considerable amount of legal work thus fell to him in preparing the Peebles Railway Bill for submission to Parliament. There were many detailed Standing Orders to be satisfied, failing which the application would almost certainly founder. These are listed in Appendix 5. In 1852, there were 204 House of Commons Standing Orders applicable to private bills.<sup>24</sup> Of these, compliance with numbers 11 to 60 had to be proved before the Examiner of Petitions before a bill could go forward to the Committee Stage. Apart from Orders 20, 21, 40 and 54, all were applicable to railway bills. Petitioners also needed to be aware of the remaining Orders (except 138-149, which dealt with the roles of the Examiner of Petitions and the Chairmen of Committees), and also the proceedings of Committees on Railway Bills. Similar arrangements applied in the House of Lords. In all this work, it was of great benefit that Bathgate not only had an intimate knowledge of Peebles and district, but also that he had previous experience as one of the Solicitors for the E&PR Railway Bill in 1845.

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<sup>22</sup> Peebles Town Council Minute Book, (TCM) 15/10/1852.

<sup>23</sup> PRM, op.cit., (ref.18) 19/7/1853. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/1).

<sup>24</sup> Parliamentary Papers (P.P.) Commons, 1852, XLII.

A private bill could begin its Parliamentary career in either Lords or Commons, but it was considered by committees in both Houses before its final acceptance or rejection. As Solicitor for the Bill, Bathgate was responsible for carrying out a number of Standing Order requirements. They included the advertising<sup>25</sup> (Order 15) of the intention to build a railway (see Fig.4-2) with notification to local Sheriffs and parish schoolmasters or Session Clerks (Order 30).<sup>26</sup> Notices had to be provided to the various landowners, tenants and occupiers along the route whose land would be required, and whose details had to be printed in Books of Reference (Order 43). Parliament required information about whether these people 'Assented', 'Dissented' or were 'Neuter' to the proposed railway (Order 19), as well as descriptions of the of the land which would be the subject of compulsory purchase (Order 33). Also to be submitted were the estimated cost of the project, and plans and elevations of the route (Order 39). Finally, it was necessary to include a list of the subscribers for the shares, to confirm that the line had genuine local support (Order 35). As we have already seen, a problem with the 1845 Edinburgh & Peebles Railway Bill had been that over four-fifths of the scrip were held in England (see Appendix 6 for the allocation of PRC shares).<sup>27</sup> John Bathgate himself had been a scripholder in the earlier Caledonian Extension and Edinburgh & Peebles Railways (Fig.4-4).

Bathgate was also responsible for the appointment of a firm of Parliamentary Agents, Messrs Dodds & Greig of Fludyer Street, Westminster. Their role was to advise on procedural matters, to ensure that Bathgate's paperwork was in order and was submitted to Parliament by the correct dates, and, if necessary, to brief a barrister to appear before the various committees. A PRC Minute Book entry of 4 February 1853 shows that Bathgate had negotiated fixed prices for the

<sup>25</sup> Advertisements had to be placed once in the Edinburgh Gazette, the publication of record in Scotland, and for three consecutive weeks in the local town and/or county newspapers.

<sup>26</sup> In rural areas, the Church of Scotland parish formed the administrative unit of local government. The Session Clerk was Secretary of the Kirk Session, which consisted of the Minister and the Ruling Elders. The Session Clerk was to be notified in those parishes that did not have a schoolmaster. In cities and Royal Burghs such as Peebles, notice had to be sent to the Town Clerk.

<sup>27</sup> A 'scrip' was the provisional document—issued by a railway company before its Bill went through Parliament—that entitled the holder to receive a formal share certificate once the Act had been passed and the necessary payments had been completed. Scrips were often bought and sold like shares.



agents' costs: £644 should the Bill be unopposed, or £1,085 should it be opposed during the Committee Stages. The same PRC Minute Book contains a letter dated 15 December 1853 from Dodds & Greig, showing that their relations with Bathgate and the PRC Board were most cordial. "What with the constant urbanity of intercourse, and the perfection of every arrangement, we have never had more satisfaction in conducting any piece of business."

Before Parliament had even begun to consider the Peebles Bill, Bathgate was sent to negotiate with a number of possible contractors to build the railway, and also with the landowners along the route. Then, together with Bouch and Sir Adam Hay, Bart., one of the PRC directors, he appeared before a House of Commons Committee on 21 May 1853, to be examined on the points needed to satisfy Parliamentary Standing Orders.<sup>28</sup> On the question concerning the level of local support, Bathgate was able to tell the Committee that "116 out of the 134 shareholders held a local interest."<sup>29</sup> He remained in London a further day for a meeting with Lord Redesdale, the formidable Chairman of Committees of the House of Lords, to 'prove the Preamble to the Bill' (Fig.4-3).<sup>30</sup> This meant satisfying Redesdale that the projected railway was both a desirable and a viable proposal, that it had genuine financial backing, and that it was not simply a means of blocking a rival scheme. The outcome was successful, and the Peebles Railway Act (16 & 17 Vict. c.78) received the Royal Assent on 8 July 1853.

Bathgate immediately set about organising the ritual ceremony for 'cutting the first sod', which took place the following month. August 9th was a 'red letter' day in the history of Peeblesshire, and the ceremony was reported at length in the *Advertiser*. Lady Montgomery, wife of the PRC Chairman, wielded the spade before a large and enthusiastic crowd from both town and county, including the Sheriffs, the Provost, Magistrates and Councillors in their robes of office, the local

<sup>28</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) 21/5/1853 (NAS/BR/PBR/1/1).

<sup>29</sup> Buchan, *op.cit.*, (ref.16) Vol.1, p.118. This should have read 'scripholders' not 'shareholders'. There were also three major investors living in England, holding about one-sixth of the scrip.

<sup>30</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) 29/6/1853.

clergy, county notables, six Masonic Lodges and two brass bands. That Bathgate had been the driving force behind the successful formation of the PRC was acknowledged during the speeches at the lunch following the ceremony. Forbes Mackenzie of Portmore, Member of Parliament for Peeblesshire, a landowner and PRC director, proposed the health of “the Secretary, to whom this scheme mainly owed its existence. It was Mr Bathgate who was the first to discover these advantages [of a railway to the County], and who, when he discovered them, was the most eloquent and able advocate of the scheme: and, when difficulties arose, it was to his energy and ardour that the obviation of them was due.”<sup>31</sup>

In his report to the half-yearly PRC meeting in April 1854, Sir Graham Montgomery MP<sup>32</sup> pointed out that agreements with the landowners along the whole of the route had been concluded without recourse to a single legal action. This was a remarkable and gratifying result, and “reflects great credit on the management of the Secretary, who has had to conduct the details of those difficult negotiations.”<sup>33</sup> The Peebles Railway Bill had thereby gone through Parliament unopposed, and, according to John Herapath,<sup>34</sup> with an exceptionally low cost of about £1,000, compared with the many thousands usually incurred.<sup>35</sup> Such a sum would have delighted the promoters of the Tewkesbury & Malvern railway, who were faced with heavy legal bills a few years later.<sup>36</sup> The PRC report of 28 October 1856 reveals that when the preliminary expenses and the advertising and printing costs were included, the total came to £2,267 15s. 8d.

In addition to these tasks, Bathgate had to deal with the routine duties of a company secretary, like the issue of ‘calls’ to scripholders to collect the balance of cash still owing, and the

<sup>31</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) 1/9/1853.

<sup>32</sup> Montgomery was now the MP for Peeblesshire after Forbes Mackenzie won a seat in Liverpool.

<sup>33</sup> *Railway Times*, 22/4/1854, p.436.

<sup>34</sup> *Herapath's Railway Journal*, (*Herapath*) 15/4/1854, p.393.

<sup>35</sup> Kellett, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) pp.430-1. Kellett's analysis of 26 companies revealed an average cost of £169,000 to obtain a railway Act.

<sup>36</sup> Kostal, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.126. A letter in *The Times* on 11/11/1862 complained that the uncontested Tewkesbury-Malvern line, only thirteen miles long, cost £35,000 in Parliamentary expenses.

subsequent preparation of a register of shareholders. There were also miscellaneous matters such as his consultations with police superintendents in Edinburgh and Peebles “in regard to the appointment of Police for the Line.”<sup>37</sup> Another responsibility was to negotiate the terms under which local stagecoach owners would be prepared to meet trains at Leadburn and Peebles, to convey passengers to and from West Linton and Innerleithen, once the railway had opened. When the railway building contractors, Bray and Dyson, had difficulty in gaining access to the land required from a Mr Hope of Pitfour, near Eskbank, in order to obtain possession of the ground Bathgate gave his personal obligation that payment would be made.<sup>38</sup>

### **The decision to run their own Railway**

As the line was nearing completion at the beginning of 1855, the working agreement with the NBR to operate the railway on behalf of the PRC fell through. This was because the NBR proposed to charge 50 per cent more per train-mile than was being paid by similar small railways elsewhere in Britain. A PRC Board Meeting decided to “direct Mr Bathgate to make enquiries at the various railway companies having single lines as to the nature of their arrangements for working the lines, and to report to next Meeting.”<sup>39</sup> In accordance with this instruction, Bathgate contacted the Maryport & Carlisle and South Devon Railways. Subsequently, he and Bouch were dispatched to update this information by looking at a further group of railways in Cumbria.<sup>40</sup> They produced a report on four of them, being particularly impressed with the Kendal & Windermere Railway. As a result, Bathgate “explained to the directors why they should take the plunge and work their own railway,” stressing the fact that large companies saw everything on too large a scale, and made no attempt at economy.<sup>41</sup> The Directors were convinced. Locomotives, carriages and wagons were ordered and the recruitment of staff

<sup>37</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) 20/8/1853. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/1).

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, 27/8/1853.

<sup>39</sup> *ibid.*, 22/1/1855. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2). The NBR wanted 1s.6d. per mile to work a 5-coach passenger train, or a 12-wagon goods train, over the Peebles line.

<sup>40</sup> *Railway Times*, 4/11/1854, p.1192.

<sup>41</sup> J. Thomas, *Forgotten Railways of Scotland* (Newton Abbot, 1981, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn.) p.31.

commenced, and on 4 July 1855, without further ceremony, the Peebles Railway began operations. (The engineering, construction, equipment, staffing and the management of the railway together with the role of the Engineer, Thomas Bouch, are dealt with in Chapter 5).

In his Chairman's statement to the shareholders on 8 November 1856, Montgomery reported that the Directors were happy with their decision to run the railway themselves. The locomotives and rolling stock originally ordered were working at full capacity, and the line was profitable. The Company needed to raise further capital quickly to supply another locomotive, more wagons and additional sidings because of growing traffic, and increasing demands by businessmen and farmers for further amenities. Bathgate therefore organised another Private Bill—at a cost of £494 11s 4d—to raise £27,000 by an issue of 5 per cent preference shares and loans of up to £9,000. This extra capital was confirmed on 26 June 1857 by Act of Parliament (20 & 21 Vict. c.14). The Peebles Railway was prospering, and it had been able to pay a small dividend of 1¼ per cent at the end of its first full year of operation. An article in the *Morning Post* suggested that the PRC Directors were even considering converting the line to dual track.<sup>42</sup>

### **The decision to lease the Peebles Railway**

However, by the end of the 1850s, considerable expenditure was becoming necessary to replace worn track and equipment. Accordingly, with the support of Montgomery and three other PRC Directors, the NBR—under its expansionist Chairman, Richard Hodgson MP—made an attempt at a complete takeover in 1860.<sup>43</sup> This was an opportunity to consolidate further the NBR's territorial hold over south-east Scotland. But, William Chambers and a number of other shareholders defeated this attempt at a PRC Extraordinary General Meeting on 14 April 1860. The dissenters thought the takeover terms were inadequate, and, in any case, they wished to see 'their railway' continue as a separate entity. "They ensured that the motion did not achieve the

<sup>42</sup> *Herapath op.cit.*, (ref.34) 6/10/1855, p.1037.

<sup>43</sup> J.L. Brown and I.C. Lawson, (eds.) *History of Peebles 1850-1990* (Edinburgh, 1990) p.327.

requisite number of votes as required by the House of Lords Wharnccliffe Order,”<sup>44</sup> thereby preventing Montgomery and the other Directors from altering the powers originally granted by Parliament. The details of the voting were reported in the *Advertiser* on 21 April 1860.

“For the Amalgamation		Against the Amalgamation	
Present	£11,170	Present	£11,970
Proxies	<u>34,850</u>	Proxies	<u>13,260</u>
Total	£46,020	Total	£25,230

“The majority for the amalgamation not being three-fourths, as required, the Bill was consequently lost.”

The outcome was that the pro-NBR Directors resigned, Chambers became Chairman, and, after several months of negotiation, the NBR leased the line from the PRC. According to Chambers, Bathgate’s great contribution had been “the part played by the Secretary during the negotiations with the North British Railway, when it was finally agreed that the Peebles Company should lease their line to the NBR, and so remain an independent corporation.”<sup>45</sup> The details of the lease were agreed by a vast majority at a further Wharnccliffe meeting held on 30 January 1861, and were reported in the *Advertiser* four days later.

1. The NBR would lease the line for 18 months on a temporary basis (allowed for under the PRC Act of 1853), followed by a perpetual lease once the NBR had obtained the necessary Act of Parliament. The NBR would work and maintain the line on behalf of the PRC, in return for 50 per cent of the gross revenues.

2. Each month, the NBR would pay 50 per cent of the gross receipts from the previous month into the PRC account, held at the Peebles branch of the Union Bank of Scotland.<sup>46</sup>

3. In any half year, should the PRC share be insufficient to pay local rates and taxes, debenture interest, preference dividends and an ordinary dividend of 5 per cent, the NBR would provide the cash required to make up the ordinary dividend.

<sup>44</sup> Brown and Lawson, *op.cit.*, (ref. 43) *History of Peebles 1850-1990* (Edinburgh, 1990) p.330.

Dissenting shareholders (present or by proxy) voted more than 25% by value of the stock involved.

<sup>45</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.9) pp.26-7.

<sup>46</sup> Bathgate was the Peebles Agent for the bank, and could monitor the payments as they became due.

4. Should the PRC's share of the revenue yield a surplus to the requirements of the previous clause, this would belong to the shareholders until an ordinary dividend of 6 per cent was paid. Any available money remaining above that percentage would be divided between the two companies.

5. The NBR would pay £20,000 for the PRC locomotives, carriages and wagons, thereby reducing the PRC Capital Account by that amount.

6. The NBR would pay the expenses of the required Act of Parliament.

In addition to the above, there were subsidiary clauses of benefit to the users of the PR, concerning the running of faster trains and the regulation of traffic. It was also understood that the NBR would make no changes to existing staff, and would maintain the distinctive livery on the PRC passenger coaches. As Chambers said at the Wharnccliffe meeting, "they had driven a pretty hard bargain," the terms of which were much more favourable than those originally offered by the NBR in 1852. Yet, despite initial misgivings by the NBR shareholders, the lease turned out well for them, as the company was never required to make payments under Clause 3 above, and each half year from August 1865 the NBR received a bonus under Clause 4.

In recognition of John Bathgate's long and invaluable services as Secretary of the PRC—for which, according to William Chambers, he had consistently refused payment <sup>47</sup>—a public meeting was held in Peebles in December 1862, where he was presented with £200 and a silver salver. Chambers outlined the benefits that the railway had conferred on Peebles, including the building of the new villas on the south side of the River Tweed. He remarked that Bathgate "had no doubt not been entirely unrequited, but he had not been killed with kindness." <sup>48</sup> He had undertaken the conveyance of the land that had been occupied by the railway, and, in all probability, had obtained the legal work associated with many of the new villas being built in the town by his friend Walter Thorburn.

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<sup>47</sup> See quotation at the head of this chapter. However, Chambers was wrong. I discovered that according to the PRC Board Minutes, Bathgate drew his £150 salary in 1857-8. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/3).

<sup>48</sup> *P.Adv. op.cit.*, (ref.1) 20/12/1862.

### **Bathgate and the promotion of another Peeblesshire Railway**

On 1 August 1861 in the office of Mackenzie & Kermack, Writers to the Signet, Edinburgh, there was a meeting of “Gentlemen friendly to the promotion of a Line of Railway through the Upper District of Peeblesshire.”<sup>49</sup> Bathgate was the principal speaker at this meeting, where he revealed the result of his prior discussions with Richard Hodgson, Chairman of the NBR. Although it was not financially feasible for the NBR to build a railway from Leadburn towards Carstairs at that juncture, Hodgson had promised to back local landowners prepared to promote a line from Leadburn to Dolphinton by guaranteeing a four per cent return on the required capital. Such a railway was likely to provide a useful feeder for the PRC, which is why Bathgate had become involved when the project was first mooted. Those present at the Edinburgh meeting “formed themselves into a Provisional Committee for the promotion of the said Undertaking,” to be called the Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway (LL&DR). They appointed Bathgate as Secretary and Thomas Bouch as Engineer. Despite his many other Peeblesshire appointments and his own legal business, Bathgate felt able to take on the LL&DR Secretaryship since his workload had been considerably reduced after the NBR lease of the PR earlier in the year.

Chaired by John Ord Mackenzie of Dolphinton, the Provisional Committee approved the draft of Bathgate's LL&DR Prospectus on 23 October 1861. It estimated that the cost of the undertaking would be £35,000 for a line just under ten miles in length, which would require no viaducts, tunnels or heavy works of any kind. “But to allow an ample margin for all contingencies (including cost of land) the capital will be fixed at £40,000 or £4,000 a-mile.” The forecast revenue was £7 per mile per week, just over half that currently produced by the Peebles line. The LL&DR would have stations in the villages of Lamanha and Macbie Hill, another at Broomlee close to West Linton, and a terminus at Dolphinton (Fig.4-6). It was claimed that the neighbourhood to be traversed by the railway possessed more mansion houses with resident families than any other part of Peeblesshire. “Any line having Edinburgh near one

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<sup>49</sup> Linton, Leadburn & Dolphinton Railway Minute Book. (LLDM) 1/8/1861 (NAS/BR/LLD/1/1).

extremity cannot fail to provide a remunerative passenger traffic.” Apart from the carriage of farm produce and animals, the area contained an ‘inexhaustible’ supply of limestone, together with freestone, ironstone and several coal seams at Coalyburn, that would be developed once the railway was completed.

In a repetition of his earlier work for the PRC, an LL&DR Minute instructed “Mr Bathgate to negotiate with the Proprietors as to the land to be taken and to see the usual steps taken for bringing the Bill before Parliament.”<sup>50</sup> By the first General Meeting on 11 December 1861, shares worth £15,520 had been applied for locally, and the landowners, “have agreed almost without exception to take shares for the value of their land required.”<sup>51</sup> Men associated with the PRC—including William Chambers, Lord Elbank, Walter Thorburn, Sir Graham Montgomery, Sir Adam Hay, John Bathgate and Thomas Bouch—had taken up a significant number of shares. Bathgate and Bouch agreed that instead of their fees being paid in cash, they should be put to their credit as the ‘calls’ on their shares became due.

At the Committee Meeting on 2 January 1862, Bathgate confirmed that the petition for their Bill had been duly lodged with Parliament, and that the Parliamentary Agents (Pritt & Co.) had never seen such a high proportion of ‘Assents’ to a railway bill before. A draft Deed of Agreement with the NBR for the lease of the proposed line was read and approved at this meeting, after Hodgson had previously “recommended that publicity as to the proposed arrangement should be avoided in the meantime.”<sup>52</sup> However, the LL&DR Directors did not immediately ratify the NBR Agreement, as they were invited to discuss the Bill with the Caledonian Railway (CR) Board who wished to offer alternative proposals. “The Caledonian viewed the LL&D with extreme suspicion; [and] feared the consequences of the NB through its

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<sup>50</sup> LLDM, *op.cit.*, (ref.49) 23/10/1861.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, 1/12/1861.

<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, 4/9/1861.



interests in the Dolphinton line getting to within ten miles of its own key junction at Carstairs.”<sup>53</sup> The Chairman and two LL&DR Directors, together with Bathgate, then met with a committee of the CR Board.

The Caledonian asked the LL&DR Directors to strike out the clauses in their Bill regarding the working of the line by the NBR. In return, the CR would bring in a Bill in 1863 to take over the LL&DR, and would extend the line to join the CR main Scottish route at Carstairs. The alternative to this was to “let the Leadburn Bill be withdrawn and the Caledonian would bring in a Bill next year to make the entire line from Carstairs to Leadburn.”<sup>54</sup> Since they already had a Bill going through Parliament and an agreement with the NBR, the LL&DR board rejected the CR proposals and “resolved to complete the agreement with the North British.”<sup>55</sup> Whereupon the Caledonian warned that they had joined with a “hostile party who has for years been obstructing Caledonian traffic,”<sup>56</sup> and proceeded to raise an objection to the LL&DR Bill.

There followed a rather vitriolic correspondence between Bathgate and Robert MacKay, Agent for the CR, with Bathgate protesting that the line was a genuine desire by a group of country landowners to make a railway for their own convenience. MacKay insisted that this was not true, but was merely a plot hatched by Hodgson and the NBR against the Caledonian. Confident that they could defeat the CR objection, the Board agreed to hire Parliamentary Counsel, and several Directors went to London—at their own expense—to appear as witnesses before the Commons Committee considering the Leadburn Bill. At the last moment the CR withdrew the objection, and Bathgate immediately complained bitterly to MacKay about the unnecessary costs that had been incurred. As well as the personal expenses of the LL&DR Directors, the invoice from Pritt & Co. included an item of £55 12s. for briefing a barrister who was never required.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup> J. Thomas, *Forgotten Railways, Scotland* (Newton Abbot, 1981) p.41.

<sup>54</sup> LLDM, *op.cit.*, (ref.49) 3/2/1862.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*, 3/2/1862.

<sup>56</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.53) p.41.

<sup>57</sup> LLDM, *op.cit.*, (ref.49) 13/9/1862.

The LL&DR received its Railway Act on 3 June 1862. Bathgate's appointment as Secretary was confirmed and the Company's bank account was placed with the Peebles branch of the Union Bank of Scotland.<sup>58</sup> His immediate task was to settle with the eleven landowners along the line whose land would be appropriated, and the experienced John Dickson of Saughton Mains, Edinburgh,<sup>59</sup> was appointed as Arbiter. Seven furlongs of the line ran through land belonging to Sir Graham Montgomery, who, although willing to sell at a reasonable price, wished for a delay in settling the terms. He was currently negotiating with the CR "for land taken in the Parish of Stobo for the Symington Extension Line [to Peebles] at present in the course of construction," and he did not want the LL&DR terms quoted against him.<sup>60</sup>

There were eight contractors who put in tenders to build the line, and after due enquiry by Bouch, John Waddell was given the contract. He was required to take 100 of the £10 shares as part of his £21,873 payment.<sup>61</sup> The rails were bought from Bolckow & Vaughan of Middlesborough at £6 per ton (ex-works).<sup>62</sup> Bathgate was then asked "to arrange with the Chief Constable at Peebles in reference to the appointment of constables during the progress of the works."<sup>63</sup>

As the expenditure was rising more quickly than the income from the calls on the shares, it was decided to apply for a loan of £25,000. Bathgate therefore approached the Bank of Scotland, the British Linen Bank and the Union Bank of Scotland to see which one would offer the most favourable terms. It was probably no surprise that the loan was finally negotiated with the Union Bank, to be operated through Bathgate's branch in Peebles.<sup>64</sup> The construction of the

<sup>58</sup> Bathgate had been the Peebles Agent for this bank since 1855.

<sup>59</sup> Dickson was also arbiter for the PRC and the NBR, (Chap.7,) for the Crieff Junction Railway, (CJR Minute Book, 26/3/1856) and the Leven Railway in Fife, (Leven Railway Letter Book, January 1866).

<sup>60</sup> LLDM, *op.cit.*, (ref.49) 13/9/1862.

<sup>61</sup> *ibid.*, 26/11/1862.

<sup>62</sup> *ibid.*, 25/3/1863. (NAS/BR/LLD/1/2). The PRC rails had cost £7 7s. per ton delivered on site, during a slump in the iron industry, and ten years later prices were obviously still depressed.

<sup>63</sup> *ibid.*, 6/1/1863.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, 8/7/1863.

LL&DR went ahead, Captain Rich RE inspected the completed line on 21 May 1864, and it opened for passenger traffic on 4 July.

However, Bathgate never saw the LL&DR in operation. He had been Agent for the Union Bank of Scotland for eight years when, in the spring of 1863, he received the offer of an appointment as Colonial Manager of the Bank of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand. He decided to emigrate with his wife and family, being partly influenced by the hope that a change of climate would improve his health.<sup>65</sup> Bathgate's other interests in Peebles and a summary of his new and successful career in New Zealand, will be found in Chapter 6.

**“But for him they might not yet have had the Peebles Railway...it was to him alone that the merit of success pertained. His probity and conscientiousness, the generousness and hearty devotion of his mind to what was right and good, made him more of a man and less of the lawyer than anyone he knew.”<sup>66</sup>**

**“The Directors in the name of the Company [LL&DR] now tender to Mr Bathgate their best thanks for his unwearied exertions on their behalf, and in their individual as well as their official capacity, beg to convey to him their warmest wishes for his success in the new and distant sphere to which he has devoted his energies for the future.”<sup>67</sup>**

These tributes to John Bathgate from railway directors are a final proof that he was the antithesis of Kostal's grasping lawyer, whose activities were detrimental to the promotion of many Victorian railways. In the following chapter we will look at the controversial career of the civil engineer Thomas Bouch, and his contribution towards the success of the Peebles Railway and other cheap lines in Scotland and northern England.

<sup>65</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.9) pp.27-8.

<sup>66</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) 15/8/1863. This quotation comes from the speech of William Chambers, PRC Chairman, at a Testimonial Dinner held in Peebles for Bathgate before he left for New Zealand. It was attended by the notables of both town and county.

<sup>67</sup> LLDM, *op.cit.*, (ref.49) 5/8/1863. (NAS/BR/LLD/1/2).

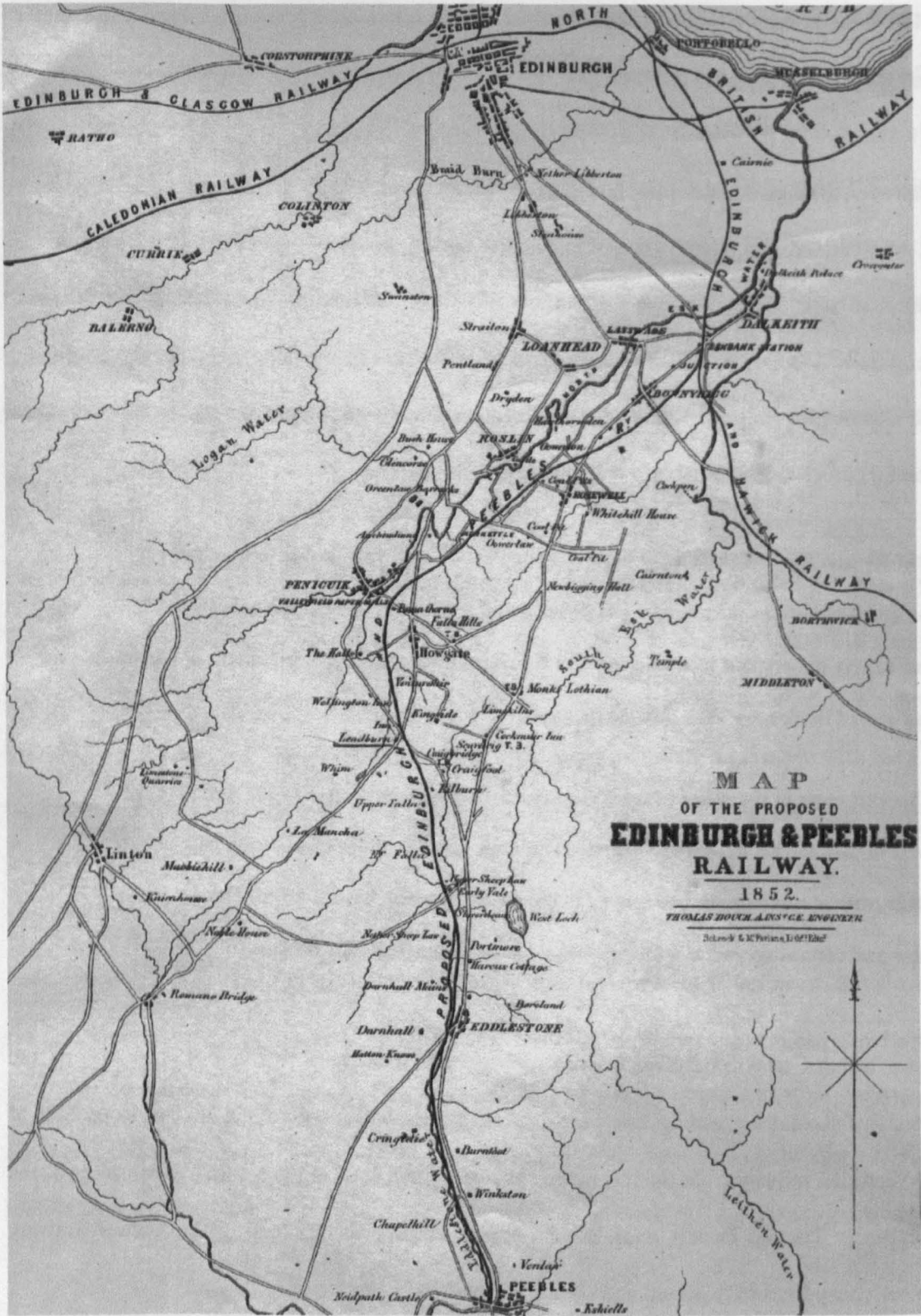


Fig.4-1. Route of the proposed Peebles Railway, 1852.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> This is a copy of the map “furnished at considerable expense to ourselves” for the subscribers of the Peeblesshire Advertiser, 6/4/1852. 1845 (Courtesy of Scottish Borders Archives, Selkirk.)

## PEEBLESHIRE ADVERTISER.

## PEEBLES RAILWAY.

(A Railway from the Hawick Branch of the North British Railway near to the Eskbank Station, to the Royal Burgh of Peebles.)

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that application is intended to be made to parliament, in the ensuing session, for leave to bring in a bill for making and maintaining a railway, with all proper works and conveniences therewith connected, commencing by a junction with the Hawick branch of the North British Railway, at a point or points upon the said Hawick branch, near to the Eskbank station, in the parish of Dalkeith and county of Edinburgh, and terminating at a point in or near a field called the Dovecot Park, at or near to the town and royal burgh of Peebles, in the parish of Peebles and county of Peebles; which said proposed railway, with the works and conveniences connected therewith, will be situate in, or will pass, or are intended to be made and maintained from, in, through, or into the several parishes and royal burgh following, or some of them, That is to say, the parishes of Dalkeith, Lasswade, Cockpen, and Pennicuik, all in the county of Edinburgh; and the parishes of Newlands, Eddlestone, and Peebles, and the royal burgh of Peebles, all in the county of Peebles: By which bill it is intended to incorporate a company, and give powers to them for carrying into effect the said undertaking:

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that it is intended by the said bill to take powers to deviate in constructing the said proposed railway and works from the line or lines laid down on the plans thereof, to be deposited as aftermentioned, to such an extent as is or will be defined upon the said plans: And also to form a junction with the rails of the said Hawick branch of the North British Railway at or near the abovementioned point or points near the Eskbank station of the said branch: And also to cross, vary, divert, and alter the lines and inclinations of or stop up permanently or temporarily all such turnpike roads, parish or statute labour roads, highways, and other roads, railways, streets, paths, passages, rivers, canals, navigations, brooks, streams, waters, mill-leads, mill-ponds, sewers, and water-courses situated within the parishes and royal burgh aforesaid, or any of them, as it may be necessary or expedient to cross, alter, vary, divert, stop up or interfere with for the purpose of making, maintaining and using the said proposed railway and works connected therewith:

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that it is intended by the said bill to take powers for the compulsory purchase of lands, houses, and other heritages for the purposes mentioned in this notice: And also to take powers to alter, vary, or extinguish all existing reserved or future rights and privileges, in or over or connected with lands, houses, and other heritages and property to be purchased or affected: And also, to vary or extinguish all other rights and privileges which might in anywise impede or interfere with the attainment of the objects to be authorised by the said bill:

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that it is intended by the said bill to take powers to acquire the land, houses and other property necessary for the construction of the line and works of the said proposed railway by way of feu or lease, and to secure the feu-duties and casualties of superiority and rents upon the revenue of the said intended railway company, and also to empower the owners, life-renters, and other parties in possession of the said lands, houses and other property, to dispose of the same by way of feu or lease to the said company.

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that it is intended by the said bill to take powers to levy tolls, rates, and duties on or for the use of the said proposed railway and works and conveniences; to alter existing tolls, rates, and duties; to confer, vary, or extinguish exemptions from payment of tolls, rates, and duties, and to confer, vary, or extinguish other rights, privileges, and exemptions:

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that it is intended by the said bill to take powers to the said company so to be incorporated to enter into, and carry into execution such contracts, arrangements and agreements with any other companies or corporations, or any commissioners, road trustees, or other bodies or persons, as may be expedient or proper for the making and maintaining of the said proposed railway and works, or for the use of the same, or for working the same, or any portion thereof, or for any purpose necessary and beneficial for the proper execution and administration of the said undertaking:

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that it is intended by the said bill to take powers to authorise and enable the North British Railway Company to enter

other and further contracts and agreements of arrangements as may be deemed advantageous, and as parliament may sanction:

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that for carrying out the several objects specified in this notice it is intended by the said bill to alter and amend, extend and enlarge, and in part repeal, so far as may be necessary, the several acts hereinafter specified relating to the North British Railway Company, or some of the said acts, or some of the powers and provisions thereof, That is to say, the acts (local and personal) 7 George IV. chapter 98; 10 George IV. chapter 122; 4 & 5 William IV. chapter 71; 7 & 8 Victoria, chapter 66; 8 & 9 Victoria, chapter 82; 8 & 9 Victoria, chapter 164; 9 & 10 Victoria, chapter 73; 9 & 10 Victoria, chapter 74; 10 & 11 Victoria, chapter 136; 11 & 12 Victoria, chapter 25; 14 & 15 Victoria, chapter 27:

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that it is intended by the said bill to empower the magistrates and town council of the royal burgh of Peebles to make and carry into effect such arrangements with the company to be incorporated by the said bill as may be mutually agreed upon in relation to the dues and customs leviable by the said magistrates and town council upon goods, cattle, matters and things passing on the said intended railway from or into the said royal burgh, and to lease such dues and customs to the said company, or to compound the same for a fixed or annual sum, and empower the said company to make and carry into effect such arrangements, and if it shall be so arranged, to empower the said company to levy and recover the said dues and customs:

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that duplicate plans and sections describing the line, situations, and levels of the said proposed railway and works, and the lands, houses, and other property which may be required to be taken for the purposes thereof, together with books of reference to such plans, containing the names of the owners or reputed owners, leasees or reputed leasees, and occupiers of such lands, houses, and other property respectively, and also a published map with the line of railway delineated thereon, and a copy of this notice as published in the *Edinburgh Gazette*, will, on or before the 30th day of November 1852, be deposited for public inspection at the office in Edinburgh of the principal sheriff-clerk of the county of Edinburgh, and at the office in Peebles of the principal sheriff-clerk of the county of Peebles; and that a copy of so much of the said plans, sections, and books of reference respectively as relates to each of the said parishes and to the said royal burgh in or through which the said proposed railway and works are intended to be made or to pass, will, together with a copy of this notice as published in the *Edinburgh Gazette*, be deposited on or before the said 30th day of November 1852, for public inspection, with the schoolmaster, if any, and if there be no schoolmaster, then with the session-clerk of each such parish at the place of abode of such schoolmaster or session-clerk, and with the town-clerk of the said royal burgh of Peebles, at his office in that town.

AND NOTICE IS ALSO HEREBY GIVEN that copies of the bill will be deposited in the Private Bill Office of the House of Commons on or before the 31st day of December 1852.

Dated this 1st day of November, 1852.

JOHN BATHGATE, writer, Peebles,  
Solicitor for the Bill.

DODDS & GREIG,  
Fludyer Street, Westminster,  
Parliamentary Agents.

THE PEEBLESHIRE MONTHLY ADVERTISER AND TWEEDSIDE JOURNAL will be published regularly on the First Tuesday of each month, and may be had on application to ROBERT STIRLING, Stationer, Peebles, or any of the local agents.

It will be delivered to Subscribers resident in any town where there is an Agent, on payment of an annual subscription of One Shilling. Stamped copies will be sent by post to those who may order them, on payment of two shillings yearly. Parties at a distance, not resident near any agent, may remit the amount to the Publisher by post-office order or postage stamps.

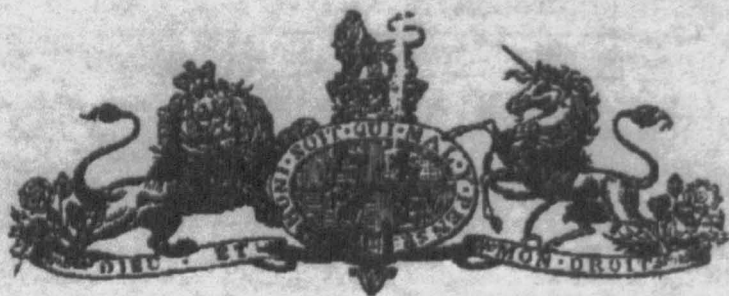
## AGENTS.

Edinburgh, Andrew Murray, 377 High Street. Biggar, Allan

Fig.4-2. Newspaper notice required by Parliamentary Standing Orders.<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> This statutory notice appeared in the Peeblesshire Advertiser on 2/11/1852. (Courtesy of Scottish Borders Archives, Selkirk.)





ANNO DECIMO SEXTO & DECIMO SEPTIMO

VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

\*\*\*\*\*

*Cap. lxxviii.*

An Act for making a Railway from the *Hawick* Branch of the *North British* Railway, near to the *Eskbank* Station, to the Royal Burgh of *Peebles*.  
[8th July 1853.]

**W**HEREAS the making of a Railway leading from the *Hawick* Branch of the *North British* Railway, near to the *Eskbank* Station in the County of *Edinburgh*, to the Town and Royal Burgh of *Peebles* in the County of *Peebles*, would be of great local and public Advantage by opening an additional, certain, and expeditious Means of Communication between the said Places, and by facilitating Communication with the City of *Edinburgh* and more distant Towns and Places: And whereas the Persons herein-after named are willing, at their own Expense, to carry such Undertaking into execution: And whereas it is expedient that the Company hereby to be incorporated shall be empowered to enter into Agreements and Arrangements as after mentioned with the *North British* Railway Company; but the various Purposes aforesaid cannot be effected without the Authority of Parliament: May it therefore please Your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the Queen's most Excellent Majesty, by and with

[Local.]

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Fig.4-3. Preamble to the Peebles Railway Act, 1853.<sup>70</sup>

<sup>70</sup> Photocopy courtesy of the Signet Library, Edinburgh.

Edinburgh 22 July 1845

Dear Sir,

Since writing this afternoon  
I have sold 10 of your Peebles Railway  
at 17/6 and will endeavour to place  
the remaining 15 shares at 20/- per  
share.

I am Dear Sir

Yours faithfully  
Robert Allan

John Bathgate Esq  
Peebles

I conclude you still  
wish your Caledonian  
Extensions sold at 7/6 per share.

Fig.4-4. Letter from Robert Allan, Bathgate's Edinburgh stockbroker.<sup>71</sup>

<sup>71</sup> This is one of a series of 10 letters in my possession from Allan to Bathgate, sent between 15 July and 19 August 1845, which show that Bathgate was regularly buying and selling scrip of both the Caledonian Extension and the Edinburgh & Peebles companies. In this instance, the scrip was being sold at a premium. Apart from debentures of £420, Bathgate did not buy shares in the later Peebles Railway Company. It is possible that now with a large family to support, he had stopped speculating in scrips or shares.

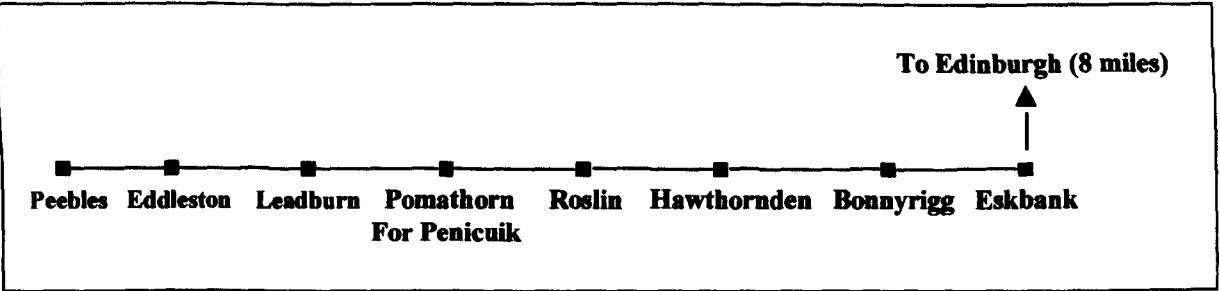


Fig.4-5. Stations on the Peebles Railway.

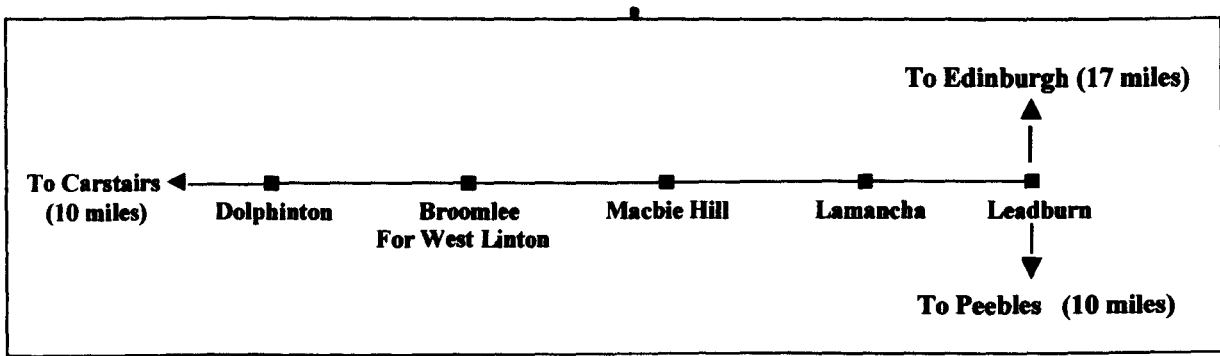


Fig.4-6. Stations on the Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>72</sup> The CR opened a branch line from to Carstairs to Dolphinton on 1 March 1867, with an end-on junction with the LL&DR section of the NBR. There were then two stations in this small village, less than a third of a mile apart.



## THOMAS BOUCH—THE ROLE OF THE RAILWAY ENGINEER

### Introduction

In this chapter we shall be looking at the design, construction and operation of the Peebles Railway between Peebles and Eskbank (Fig.4-1, p.68), and, in particular, the proficiency of Thomas Bouch CE, the Consulting Engineer (Fig.5-1). He has been the subject of severe criticism in the writings of John Thomas <sup>1</sup> and, especially, of David St.J. Thomas.<sup>2</sup> The latter wrote that “everything Bouch touched went wrong,” that he was “unbelievably inept,” the provider of a “shocking service” and who, thirty years before his death, had already established “a disastrous pattern of behaviour” which would inevitably lead to the Tay Bridge disaster.<sup>3</sup> To gauge whether these criticisms can be upheld, we shall consider Bouch’s performance for the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) and for three other contemporary lines that marked the start of the so-called ‘Cheap Railway Movement’ in the UK. Finally, to help make a judgement on Bouch’s engineering competence, we will look at some of his engineering innovations.

### Background

Thomas Bouch was born in 1822 at Thursby near Carlisle, the son of a captain in the Merchant Navy.<sup>4</sup> At 17, he was working on the Lancaster & Carlisle Railway as an assistant to the eminent engineer Joseph Locke, and four years later he was one of the resident engineers of the Stockton & Darlington Railway. In 1849, at the early age of 26, he became Manager and Engineer of the Edinburgh & Northern Railway.<sup>5</sup> The following year he went into private practice from an office in George Street, Edinburgh, and he quickly grew a reputation for building profitable, low-cost railways. In total, Bouch was ultimately responsible for almost 300 miles of railway in the north of England and southern Scotland.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> J. Thomas, *Forgotten Railways: Scotland*. (Newton Abbot, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn., 1981) pp.21-2.

<sup>2</sup> D. St.J. Thomas, *The Country Railway* (Harmondsworth, 1979) p.28.

<sup>3</sup> J. Thomas, *The Tay bridge Disaster* (Newton Abbot, 1972) This work provides a more sympathetic assessment of Bouch’s culpability for the failure of the bridge.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.* p.16.

<sup>5</sup> In 1850, this railway changed its name to the more appropriate Edinburgh, Perth & Dundee Railway.

<sup>6</sup> F. Ferneyhough, *The History of Railways in Britain* (Reading, 1975) pp.228-30.

### Design and Construction of the Peebles Railway

We saw in Chapter 4 that Chambers and Bathgate had made a visit to see Bouch's pioneering work at St Andrews in low-cost railway construction. Bouch subsequently made a good impression at the inaugural meeting of the promoters of the Peebles Railway in April 1852, and was immediately appointed as the Interim Engineer, and given the task of carrying out a full survey of the proposed line. As a result of the survey, where Bouch took care to avoid expensive earthworks or bridges, and to minimise severance problems, he offered to undertake the project himself for the sum of £63,800, including Parliamentary expenses.<sup>7</sup> This offer was declined, but it convinced the PRC Management Committee to go ahead, and Bouch was confirmed as the Supervising Engineer when the Company was incorporated in May 1852. He then produced the necessary plans and estimates, in time for Bathgate to meet the deadlines for submitting railway bill applications to Parliament (Appendix 5).

With the help of Bouch, the PRC Directors drew up a list of 12 possible contractors to build their railway, and, after a thorough investigation—a hallmark of the PRC Board—they accepted the tender of £50,368 by Bray & Dyson of Leeds.<sup>8</sup> In the wake of the Railway Mania of 1845-6, contractors were desperate for work, and this firm had submitted a keen price for the job without requiring an initial down payment. They had also agreed to take £10,000 of the contract price in shares instead of cash, if the promoters had difficulty in raising the required capital.<sup>9</sup>

The supply of rails constituted a large item in the construction costs, and in this particular case it was the job of Bouch, and not the contractor, to find them. Fortunately, two outside circumstances were in favour of the PRC. Firstly, by 1852 iron was cheap thanks to Neilson's hot-blast production system—Scottish pig-iron output had risen twenty-fold, from 38,000 tonnes

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<sup>7</sup> J.W. Buchan, (ed.) *A History of Peeblesshire* (Glasgow, 1925) Vol.1, p.117.

<sup>8</sup> PRC Minute Book, (PRM) 8/8/1852. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/1).

<sup>9</sup> The PRC share offer was successful, and Bray and Dyson were not required to take any shares.

in 1830 to 760,000 tonnes in 1850.<sup>10</sup> Secondly, the North British Railway (NBR) was going through one of its periodic financial crises. The NBR Board Minutes of 9 October 1852 reveal that “the shortcomings on the Revenue Account of the present half year” meant that they were unable to meet the 6 per cent interest due on the preference shares. This was probably why Bouch was offered 2,200 tons of 16-foot rails at £7 15s. per ton from the NBR stockpile, sufficient to complete the PRC line. According to the NBR Minutes of 10 September 1852, Bouch’s initial ranging offer was only £5 a ton, but the final price was agreed at £7 7s. The weight of the rails was not disclosed, but according to the PRC Minute Book it was greater than that required for a branch line. It is likely that the NBR had originally bought these rails for main line work, and they probably weighed 70 lbs. per yard, the weight used between Edinburgh and Berwick.<sup>11</sup> As a consequence, on the PRC branch line where there were no heavy engines running at high speeds, there would be less wear and tear and fewer broken rails. As we shall see later in the chapter, lightweight rails used in the construction of the railway at St Andrews were an important cause of well-documented maintenance problems.

After the ritual ceremony of ‘cutting the first sod’ had taken place in Peebles on 9 August 1853, work began immediately at the Eskbank end of the line, with a workforce ultimately rising to about 450 men.<sup>12</sup> The aim was to complete the construction by the end of 1854, but there were delays due to bad weather and to problems just south of Leadburn (Fig.4-1).<sup>13</sup> At the highest point on the line, Kingside Edge, just over 900 feet above sea level, there was about half a mile of semi-liquid moss, unable to bear the weight of trains. This was a considerable source of worry for the PRC Directors, and they instructed their Engineer to meet them on site for “a

<sup>10</sup> D. Goodman and C.W. Chant, (eds.), *European Cities & Technology: industrial to post-industrial city*. (London, 1999) p.51.

<sup>11</sup> C. Hamilton Ellis, *The North British Railway* (London, 1955) p.7.

<sup>12</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.8) 11/8/1854 (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2).

<sup>13</sup> *Railway Times*, 27/10/1855. The railway was almost seven months late in opening, but a sympathetic Board decided not to enforce the late-delivery penalty clause in the contract. “Taking the whole circumstances into account, and the difficulties with which the contractors had to contend, the directors did not deem it expedient to press for damages for the delay in finishing the works.”

minute inspection.”<sup>14</sup> The problem was similar to that faced by George Stephenson at Chat Moss on the Liverpool & Manchester Railway, a quarter of a century earlier. Bouch’s solution was to make a floor of rough planks, on top of which was laid a close-packed layer of tree boughs and brushwood. A thick coating of mud was then applied to consolidate the layers below, and the sleepers were laid on top. Finally, deep wide drains were dug to draw off any superfluous water.<sup>15</sup> As a precautionary measure, a 10-mph speed restriction was placed on trains crossing the moss.<sup>16</sup> Apart from this unstable area, the rest of the line was relatively free of construction problems, and went ahead as planned.

Once the summit had been reached at Kingside Edge, trains from the Eskbank direction had an easy run down to Peebles along the valley of the Eddleston Water. But, earlier in the journey from Eskbank, locomotives had to deal with the ruling gradient (that is, the steepest gradient found on the line) of 1 in 53, and in the 1850s, railway engines had very limited pulling power. Coal from the Midlothian coalfield—especially that produced by the Whitehill Colliery at Rosewell, (Fig.4-1), owned by PRC Director Wardlaw Ramsay—was likely to make up a significant proportion of the goods traffic. But, the PRC engines would only be able to haul a small number of laden wagons up the long 1 in 53 incline. This problem was overcome by placing a siding near Leadburn station, so that laden coal wagons could be parked there while the engine went back and brought up another batch. The combined train then ran down to Peebles without difficulty. Since the wagons were empty on the return journey, the engine had no problem with a full complement on the gentle gradients back to Leadburn.

“The Peebles station, including station-house, goods’ shed, platform &c. has been contracted for £1,162—a sum far below the usual expenditure on a principal station...and ten level-crossing

<sup>14</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.8) 16/6/1854. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2).

<sup>15</sup> W. Chambers, *Peebles and Its Neighbourhood with a Run on Peebles Railway* (Edinburgh, 1863) p.22.

<sup>16</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.8) 3/7/1855. “Ordered that the Engine Driver crossing the Moss do not [*sic*] proceed at a greater rate than ten miles an hour.”

houses are being built and finished for £1,690.”<sup>17</sup> These contracts were awarded to Mr Dickson, a Peebles builder. Mr Lumsden from Middleton was to build the five country stations—Eddleston, Leadburn, Pomathorn (for Penicuik), Roslin and Hawthornden—for the sum of £2,060.<sup>18</sup> No architectural extravagances were allowed: in the words of Lord Elibank, the Deputy Chairman, the railway buildings were to be “neat but not gaudy.”

Meanwhile, in the summer of 1854, negotiations with the NBR to operate the line on behalf of the PRC Board fell through, as their terms were thought to be excessive. The Directors then approached Johnston & Kinder of Birmingham, a firm “whose business it was to supply complete plant (everything from tickets to locomotives) and staff of all grades for the working of independent railways.”<sup>19</sup> However, by the time the Board had finally decided to go ahead, Johnston & Kinder had to decline “as their resources were stretched to the limit equipping a 750-mile railway in Europe.”<sup>20</sup>

The Board therefore began to consider the possibility of operating the railway themselves, and Bouch was dispatched with the PRC Secretary, John Bathgate, to investigate a group of small independent railways in north-west England. They carried out this task with great thoroughness, and their subsequent report occupies seven pages in the PRC Board Minutes of 22 July 1854. “A vote of thanks was unanimously passed to the Engineer and Secretary for their care and attention in this matter.” The report reached the following conclusion. “Beyond all question a small company is able to work their Line more economically and to greater advantage themselves, than when under such a Lease or Contract as has been proposed.” Bouch calculated that the Peebles Railway (PR) could be operated at an average cost of 10d. per train mile, which was significantly less than the sum required by the NBR. The price it had demanded for

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<sup>17</sup> *Herapath's Railway Journal (Herapath)* 28/10/1854. The final cost after sidings, goods shed, turntable and engine shed were added amounted to £3,500.

<sup>18</sup> A further station, Bonnyrigg, was added before the line opened.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) pp.29-31.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, p.31.

working 5-coach passenger trains or 12-wagon goods trains at the ruling gradient of 1 in 53 was 1s. 6d. per mile.<sup>21</sup>

The Directors immediately resolved to decline the NBR proposals and to work the line themselves. “Remit to the Engineer to order two Tank Engines from Messrs Neilson of Glasgow, at £1,800 each, and to obtain a Tender from Messrs Griffin & Henson of Birmingham, for the remainder of the Rolling Stock.”<sup>22</sup> The Board then appointed a General Manager (ex-NBR) and a Locomotive Superintendent (ex-Caledonian Railway) at salaries of £150 a year, and set about recruiting other staff, having been advised in the Bouch-Bathgate report to exercise proper care “in the selection of efficient men to whom good wages should be paid.” Their suggested weekly pay rates for the various grades are given in Table 5-1.

<b>Driver</b>	<b>42s.</b>	<b>Fireman</b>	<b>24s.</b>	<b>Guard</b>	<b>20s. (plus a uniform)</b>	
<b>Fitter</b>	<b>42s.</b>	<b>Carpenter 1</b>	<b>20s.</b>	<b>Carpenter 2</b>	<b>16s.</b>	<b>Smith 14s.</b>

Table 5-1. Proposed pay rates for PRC railwaymen.

Apart possibly from carpenters and smiths, there were no available men in Peebles to fill the skilled jobs. But, in the 1850s, these were comparatively well paid, and in all probability the PRC had no difficulty in attracting staff to fill the vacant positions. The rates for station staff and other job grades varied according to the degree of responsibility, and whether housing was provided. For example, the Stationmaster at Leadburn had a salary of 17s. a week and a house.

The PRC Minute Books do not reveal employee numbers, but the Parliamentary Papers show that at the end of the second year of operation in June 1857 there were 53 employees.<sup>23</sup> From the Census Enumerators’ Books for Peebles, I have been able to compile lists of the various

<sup>21</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.1), p.29.  
<sup>22</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.8) 22/7/1854 . (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2).  
<sup>23</sup> P.P. XXXVI 1857 2nd Session, pp.340-1. Manager, Inspector, Foreman, 7 Station Masters, Storekeeper, 2 Clerks, 2 Artificers, 2 Drivers, 2 Firemen, 2 Guards, 4 Porters, 2 Switchmen, 9 Platelayers, 3 Gatekeepers and 14 Labourers.

railway jobs and the origins of the employees who filled them (Appendix 3). The list for 1861 confirms that the skilled men were not natives of Peeblesshire.<sup>24</sup> Unfortunately, it is not complete—for example, the Locomotive Superintendent and an engine driver are missing—and of the smiths or carpenters in the Census records, none are prefixed by the word ‘Railway’. In addition, there were a number of platelayers, surfacemen and crossing keepers in the other parishes between Peebles and Eskbank, as well as the staffs at the intermediate stations.

As we saw earlier, two locomotives were bought at a total cost of £3,600, and, in accordance with the standard practice of the time, they were given local names *Tweed* and *St Ronans*. Tank engines were chosen because initially it was not intended to install a turntable, and the Board of Trade (BoT) considered it unsafe to haul passenger trains tender first (see the BoT refusal to allow the opening of a section of the Bedale & Leyburn Railway, Chapter 15). To complete the required plant, Bouch was instructed to order the following passenger coaches and wagons from Griffin & Henson:-<sup>25</sup>

2 composite 1 <sup>st</sup> /2 <sup>nd</sup> -class carriages	£250 each	£500
2 third class carriages	150	300
2 break vans [ <i>sic</i> ]	120	240
10 cattle wagons	70	700
10 high-sided wagons (used also for sheep)	56	560
20 long, low-sided wagons	56	1,120
20 mineral wagons	50	1,000
2 horse boxes	125	250
2 goods break vans	125	<u>250</u>
Grand total		£4,920

Track laying was completed by the end of March 1855, and was marked by the appearance in Peebles of the Contractors’ engine *Soho* on 2 April. There were still a few outstanding items to

<sup>24</sup> The PRC line had been leased to the NBR for two months when the Census was taken, but “it was understood that the North British Company proposed no changes to the staff.” (*P.Adv.*, 2/2/1861).

<sup>25</sup> PRM, *op.cit* (ref.8), 22/7/1854. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2). It is interesting to compare the PRC plant list with that proposed by the NBR : viz. 4 locomotives, 16 carriages, 108 trucks and 4 brake vans. This information is in the NBR Minute Book, (NBRM) dated 3/2/1854. (NAS/BR/NBR/1/6).

finish, and the first actual train arrived in Peebles on 29 May, witnessed by a large and enthusiastic crowd.<sup>26</sup> It consisted of a Bray & Dyson engine, two composite and two third-class coaches in the PRC livery, and several wagons. The line was almost ready for its statutory BoT inspection, to be undertaken by Captain H.W. Tyler RE on 28 June 1855.

The newly delivered PRC locomotive *Tweed*, drawing the two composite carriages, met the Inspector at Eskbank Station, and brought the party to Peebles. Captain Tyler “examined the line and works, and expressed himself highly satisfied.”<sup>27</sup> It was quite common to find that a BoT inspection unearthed a number of problems that had to be rectified before the line was allowed to open for passenger traffic. Tyler did not require any alterations to be made to the Peebles Railway, which reflected well on Bouch and the Contractor.

It was therefore a great shock to the PRC management when they saw that the BoT approval letter, dated 2 July, was conditional on there being only ‘one engine in steam’ at any one time. However, a compromise was quickly reached so that the line, opened on 4 July, was worked as two separate halves, with one engine allowed in each. With only three passenger trains a day in each direction, and plenty of gaps in the timetable available for scheduling goods trains, there was little chance of a collision.

From Peebles				From Edinburgh			
Peebles	7.45	11.00	4.45	Edinburgh	9.00	12.30	4.25
Leadburn	8.13	11.28	5.13	Eskbank	9.30	12.56	4.54
Eskbank	8.48	12.03	5.48	Leadburn	10.08	1.33	5.31
Edinburgh	9.25	12.30	6.25	Peebles	10.35	2.00	6.00

Table 5-2. The original PRC Passenger Train Timetable <sup>28</sup>

<sup>26</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (P.Adv.) 1/6/1855.  
<sup>27</sup> *Herapath*, op.cit (ref.17) 20/10/1855, p.1087.  
<sup>28</sup> From the booklet, ‘Timetables of the North British, Peebles, Selkirk & Jedburgh Railways,’ 1/9/1858.



The PR was an immediate success, and in the first eight weeks it recorded a clear profit of £990 18s. 8d.<sup>29</sup> By the beginning of December the railway had already carried some 40,000 passengers, and the platforms at several intermediate stations were now too short to accommodate the longer trains. The fares to Edinburgh and the revenue split between the PRC and the NBR over a complete journey are shown in Table 5-3.<sup>30</sup> There were no third-class return tickets. Since the PRC did not have to pay for the Edinburgh terminus, as a *quid pro quo*

Edinburgh to Peebles	SINGLE			RETURN		
	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>
PRC Share	3s. 3d.	2s. 4d.	1s. 6d.	5s. 6d.	3s. 8d.	N/A
NBR Share	9d.	8d.	6d.	1s. 6d.	1s. 4d.	N/A
TOTAL	4s. 0d.	3s. 0d.	2s. 0d.	7s. 0d.	5s. 0d.	
Cost per mile	1.77d.	1.33d.	0.9d.			
Scottish Average Cost *	1.7d.	1.45d.	0.85d.			

\* Source:- P.P. XXXVI 1857 2nd Session, p.11.

Table 5-3. The Edinburgh-Peebles Fare Structure.

the NBR was not charged for the use of the Peebles carriages over its section of the line. The rising passenger and goods traffic soon made additional locomotives and rolling stock necessary, and a new Act of Parliament was obtained to raise the required finance (Chapter 4, p.60). Two 0-4-2 goods locomotives with tenders were ordered from Hawthorn & Co. of Leith, and were named *Neidpath Castle* and *Roslin Castle*.<sup>31</sup>

We have seen that the PR had been built with the utmost economy, and it was then managed in an equally economical manner so that it never failed to pay a dividend. The working arrangements for the line, instituted by the PRC Board, aroused the admiration of an experienced French railway engineer, M. Bergeron. His 1861 report on the PR became part of an official

<sup>29</sup> B. Peacock, *Border Country Railways* (1982, Hawick) p.10.

<sup>30</sup> NBR Minute Book, (NBRM) 25/5/1855. (NAS/BR/NBR/1/7). The full list of fares and revenue sharing, including those for intermediate stations, were approved by the NBR Board at this meeting.

<sup>31</sup> These engines were similar to the one shown in Fig.5-2.

French enquiry into the Cheap Railway Movement in Britain.<sup>32</sup> Bergeron concentrated on two particular aspects of the PRC operations. Firstly, the railway shut down at night after the last trains to and from Edinburgh and Peebles. All level crossing gates were then closed to stop animals straying on to the line, and the railway staff went home until the following morning. “Thus the Peebles Railway is exempt from night service, from the cost of lighting, from night watching of crossings, and station and train signals—in short, from all that inevitable expense that night service involves.”<sup>33</sup> Secondly, Bergeron was surprised at the number of separate duties required of the staff. The Stationmaster at Roslin had combined the duties of stationmaster, cash taker and crossing keeper, without a break, since the line opened in 1855. On seeing two wagons of coal that were waiting to be unloaded, Bergeron thought that the Company should have provided him with some assistance. But, it transpired that the customers themselves furnished the men to discharge the trucks. “Thus, the public being themselves required, and willing, to operate the goods’ train service, the Peebles Company is enabled to exhibit a remarkable economy in its working arrangements.”<sup>34</sup> This probably helps to explain why there were only four porters on the payroll in 1857 (Note 23).

Peebles soon became a centre for grain, a market that had been lost since the end of the eighteenth century. On 20 November 1855, about 70 carts brought wheat, barley and oats into the newly-built corn market in Peebles, with buyers coming in by train from Edinburgh.<sup>35</sup> In a farming county like Peeblesshire, the cost of moving animals to market was obviously of importance (Table 5-4). Yet, according to Chambers, because of the conservatism of the local agricultural interests, it took longer than the PRC Board had anticipated before farmers began to make full use of the railway. However, in 1860, he was able to provide a telling statistic for

<sup>32</sup> *Les Chemins de Fer à bon Marché* contained in the *Enquête sur l'Exploitation et la Construction des Chemins de Fer*, 1853, quoted by *Railway News* 16/1/1864, p.52.

<sup>33</sup> *Railway News* 16/1/1864 p.52.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>35</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit* (ref.26) 1/12/1855. Grain then left the town in ten railway trucks.

shareholders. Out of the total goods traffic of 29,886 tons in the previous six months, the rural station at Eddleston had dealt with 2,643 tons, “a traffic wholly due to the railway.”<sup>36</sup>

<b>Cattle</b>	<b>Half truck</b>	<b>(3 animals)</b>	<b>6s.3d.</b>	<b>Whole truck</b>	<b>11s. 3d.</b>
<b>Sheep</b>	<b>-do-</b>	<b>(15 -do- )</b>	<b>5s. 0d.</b>	<b>-do-</b>	<b>7s. 0d.</b>
<b>Pigs &amp; Calves</b>	<b>-do-</b>	<b>(12 -do- )</b>	<b>5s. 0d.</b>	<b>-do-</b>	<b>7s. 0d.</b>

Table 5-4. Rates for the conveyance of animals between Peebles and Edinburgh.<sup>37</sup>

Another example of new business made possible by the PRC was the sale of timber from Peeblesshire estates. Sir Adam Hay owned woods that his father had planted, and which were costing £200 per annum to maintain. Until the arrival of the railway Sir Adam had been unable to sell the timber, but now he was clearing £700 a year. “The laying out of a few thousand pounds on our stock was the best investment he ever made in his life.”<sup>38</sup> However, even before the arrival of the steam-powered woollen mills, coal was the most important single item of freight carried by the PR, as can be seen from the following table.

PASSENGERS				GENERAL	COAL	OTHER	ANIMALS
1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Season	GOODS		MINERALS	
£347	£509	£921	£36	£1,108	£1,335	£24	£49
Total Passengers			£1,813	Total Freight		£2,516	
GRAND TOTAL £4,329							

Table 5-5. Peebles Railway half-year receipts to 30 June 1857.<sup>39</sup>

It therefore seems that Bouch had given the PRC Directors what they had hoped for—a profitable “local line adapted to a district traffic and a moderate rate of speed.”<sup>40</sup> Although the

<sup>36</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit* (ref.26) 3/11/1860. From Chambers report to the 15th half-yearly meeting.

<sup>37</sup> *ibid.*, 1/1/1856 This information was in an advert signed by the PRC Manager, Wm. Knox.

<sup>38</sup> *Herapath*, *op.cit.*, (ref. 17) 5/10/1860, p.1023. From the 15th half-yearly meeting report.

<sup>39</sup> P.P. LI, 1857-8 pp.582-3. The receipts under ANIMALS demonstrate the conservatism of the local farmers. It took several years for livestock to provide substantial revenues for the PR.

<sup>40</sup> *Chambers op.cit.*, (ref.15) p.9.

Parliamentary and legal expenses had been low, the final costs were more than Bouch’s original estimate of £63,800.

<b>Parliamentary and Law</b>	<b>£2,268</b>
<b>Engineering</b>	<b>2,300</b>
<b>Land and Compensation</b>	<b>17,012</b>
<b>Works and Rails</b>	<b>62,103</b>
<b>General Expenses</b>	<b><u>2,476</u></b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£86,159</b>
<b>Figures to the nearest £</b>	

Table 5-6. Legal and Construction costs of the Peebles Railway.<sup>41</sup>

Had there had been any complaints from the PRC Board about their Engineer, Bouch would not have been appointed as Consulting Engineer for the Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway in north-west Peeblesshire, which opened in July 1864. Nor, a few years later, would the neighbouring Esk Valley Railway in Midlothian have employed him. William Chambers—Promoter, Director and finally Chairman of the PRC—was associated with Bouch for a quarter of a century. Not a man who would accept the second-rate, his judgement of Bouch’s performance for the PRC was that “considering the nature of the ground, and the limited capital at command, it may be said that the line has been effected with no inconsiderable skill.”<sup>42</sup> So, in this part of Scotland at least, David St.J.Thomas’ descriptions “shocking service” and “inept” did not apply.

**Bouch and the ‘Cheap Railway Movement’**

Thomas Bouch inaugurated the Cheap Railway Movement in Britain. He specialised in building inexpensive, single-track lines that were effectively light railways designed to suit the requirements of rural areas, and which used light locomotives running at modest speeds. According to Robertson, until the 1850s Scottish railways had cost over £32,000 per mile to

<sup>41</sup> *Herapath,op.cit.*,(ref.17) 8/11/1856, p.1157. Quoting from the 7<sup>th</sup> PRC Half-yearly Report.

<sup>42</sup> *Chambers op.cit.*, (ref.15) p.8.

build.<sup>43</sup> Unless this cost could be drastically reduced, small towns like Peebles in sparsely populated districts would never be able to achieve the benefits of rail transport. It was Bouch who showed how this could be done, thereby exciting the interest of a number of promoters in other rural districts in Scotland who decided to build their own cheap lines. They either employed Bouch or the other railway engineers who followed in his footsteps.

As with the PR, the three lines we shall now briefly review cost less than £6,000 per mile.<sup>44</sup> Bouch's first two commissions—pre-dating the PRC—were the St Andrews Railway, opened in July 1852, and the Leven Railway, opened in August 1854. Unfortunately, information on the latter is sketchier than for the other Bouch railways, as the only records in the National Archives of Scotland consist of a few letters. According to John Thomas, the engineering and the construction of both lines were grossly inadequate. The other Bouch commission we shall consider was the Crieff Junction Railway, built almost in parallel with the Peebles Railway, and opened in March 1856. Here again, Bouch was the subject of criticism by John Thomas, but on this occasion it was due to unacceptable delays rather than inferior construction.

### **The St Andrews Railway**

In the 1850s, St Andrews was undergoing something of a renaissance under the energetic administration of Provost Hugh Lyon Playfair, who believed that the introduction of a railway would boost the number of visitors to the town. The St Andrews Railway (StAR) branched off the Edinburgh-Dundee main line of the Edinburgh, Perth & Dundee Railway (EP&DR) at Leuchars Junction. It was the first of the cheap railways in Scotland, and was built over 4 miles of relatively flat terrain “within the strict financial limitations” of the sponsors.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> C.J.A. Robertson, ‘The Cheap Railway Movement in Scotland: the St Andrews Railway’, *Transport History*, Vol.1, No.1. Spring 1974, p.3.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, Appendix II. St Andrews £5,958; Peebles £4,020; Crieff Junction £5,511. There was no total cost for the 6-mile Leven Railway, but the construction tender was just over £2,200 per mile.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, p.12.

However, the shoestring budget insisted upon by the Directors—Provost Playfair, Robert Haig, the whisky distiller, and one or two local merchants—was the root cause of growing maintenance bills over the years. In order to meet the financial constraints, Bouch had been forced to use 60 lb. rails and inferior quality chairs to secure them to the sleepers,<sup>46</sup> which were spaced four feet apart instead of the usual three feet. But, because of the number of broken rails, it was almost immediately found necessary to increase the number of sleepers on the curves.

Although the low cost of obtaining the Peebles Railway Act of Parliament was hailed by *Herapath* as virtually unprecedented (Chapter 4), the total cost of the St Andrews Act only amounted to £1,072,<sup>47</sup> or just under half the cost of the PRC Act. Another noteworthy financial comparison is that the EP&DR agreed to work the 4 mile railway between Leuchars and the St Andrews terminus for 1s. per train mile. This was a third less than the rejected NBR proposal for operating the PRC line, but it must be remembered that working expenses on the Peebles Railway were always higher because of the heavy gradients involved.

When itemising the probable annual expenses, the StAR prospectus had shown a figure for “Maintenance of Way, Buildings and Works” of only £50 a mile.<sup>48</sup> The StAR regularly paid dividends well above the average level for Scottish railways, and, with hindsight, more of the income should have been ploughed back into track improvements. This might then have avoided the only accident—in May 1864—that occurred before the amalgamation with the NBR in 1877.<sup>49</sup> A broken rail caused a six-wheeled engine and a luggage van on a three-coach passenger train to be derailed, fortunately without any injuries. This accident was not just a matter of inadequate maintenance. The introduction of heavier locomotives to deal with a rising

<sup>46</sup> 60 lb. (or any other figure) refers to the weight of one yard of rail. Compare with PRC 70 lb weight.

<sup>47</sup> P.P. XXIII 1859. It is not clear whether this StAR figure included the advertising and printing costs. We saw that the PRC total cost was £2,267 15s. 8d., including expenses (Chapter 4).

<sup>48</sup> W.S. Scott, *The Railways of Fife* (Perth, 1980) p.82 Compare this with the Caledonian figure of £300 a mile, which itself was inadequate (Chapter 12).

<sup>49</sup> Robertson, *op.cit.*, (ref.43) p.12.

volume of traffic had not been anticipated when it was originally decided to use lightweight rails. The problem was further compounded by the fact that the rails were well worn, and, because there was no turntable at St Andrews, the engine was running tender foremost, contrary to BoT regulations.<sup>50</sup> After a scathing accident report by the BoT inspector, Captain F.H. Rich RE, the relaying of the track was begun in a rather piecemeal fashion, “and in spite of the Directors having insisted to Bouch that 65 lb. rails would suffice, it was done with 73 lb. rails.”<sup>51</sup> The Directors had lost none of their parsimony despite the StAR problems.

### **The Leven Railway**

The saga of the six miles long Leven Railway does not redound to Bouch’s credit, for there is no doubt that the Leven Directors suffered at his hands. It is difficult to find any excuses for his conduct, for Bouch had apparently submitted plans with wrong measurements, did not answer many of their sometimes frantic letters, and did not appear at a number of Board meetings where he had been specifically asked to attend. “On 24 May 1853 the Board again instructed Bouch to make immediate agreement with the EP&DR concerning Thornton Junction,” but eight months later negotiations had still not been started.<sup>52</sup> And, because the line had been built with sharper curves than shown on the plans submitted to Parliament, the locomotive Bouch had ordered from Hawthorn & Co. could not negotiate the curves at the speeds required to maintain the published timetable. There is no indication of the weight of rails Bouch used, but the sleepers were spaced four-feet apart on the straight sections, with a three-foot spacing on the curves.

Some months after the line was opened in August 1854, the Leven Directors wrote to Bouch, complaining bitterly of his incompetence and neglect. Their letter stated “that in the execution of the works the variation from the plans have been of the most disgraceful character, that the statutory powers of the company have been violated, the Board of Trade misled and that the

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<sup>50</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.48) pp. 82-3.

<sup>51</sup> Robertson, *op.cit.*, (ref.43) p.13.

<sup>52</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.16.

Leven company are exposed to the danger of having the line shut up.”<sup>53</sup> In view of these serious charges, it is therefore very surprising that a competent officer, Captain Tyler, had passed the line as fit to begin passenger operations after he had carried out the BoT inspection on 2 August 1854.<sup>54</sup> In their exasperation, could the Leven Board have been guilty of some exaggeration?

### **The Crieff Junction Railway**

Crieff, like Peebles, had been trying to get a railway for many years, and on 15 August 1853—a month after the PRC Act—the Crieff Junction Railway (CJR) promoters finally obtained their Act of Parliament. In a similar manner to the PRC, the CJR Management Committee had previously approached the principal landowners along the proposed route, and found that they were all in favour of the railway. It would run nine miles south from the town of Crieff to a junction on the Perth-Stirling section of the Scottish Central Railway:<sup>55</sup> not 12 miles as stated by John Thomas. The only building at the junction would be the railway station, as the nearest village, Blackford, was some distance away.

The Management Committee had obviously not heard of the problems with the Leven Railway. “The Committee put themselves in communication with Mr Thomas Bouch Civil Engineer Edinburgh—well known for his ability and skill in the economical construction of Railways.”<sup>56</sup> These Minutes reveal a major difference of principle between the PRC and the CJR Directors. Instead of buying the land, the CJR Board instructed the Joint Secretaries “to ascertain from the landowners on the Line whether they would accept an annual feu duty for such portions of their land as will be required for the undertaking, in place of a Sum to be paid down as the value of the land.”<sup>57</sup> Most of them appear to have accepted. Mr Gowans, the CJR

<sup>53</sup> Leven Railway Letter Book, 20/12/1855. (NAS/BR/LR/1/1).

<sup>54</sup> Tyler became BoT Chief Inspecting Officer (1870-77), and was knighted for his services. He later became, *inter alia*, President of the Grand Trunk Railway of Canada, Deputy Chairman of the Great Eastern Railway, Chairman of the Westinghouse Brake Co., and a Tory M.P.

<sup>55</sup> P.P. LVII 1861 pp.14-17. “Miles Open—9.”

<sup>56</sup> Crieff Junction Railway Minute Book (CJRM), 8/10/1853.

<sup>57</sup> *ibid.*, 8/10/1853 For an explanation of annual feu duty see Chapter 7, Note 3, p.114.



Contractor, was required to take £10,000 of his £33,000 contract price in shares, whereas the PRC raised the required capital without having to invoke a similar clause in their contract with Bray & Dyson.

Sadly, the Leven saga was repeated. There were problems due to construction delays, as well as the inability of the Crieff Board to get Bouch to come to meetings or to answer letters. For example, he had been instructed to appear for the vital initial meeting with the Board and the Contractor, to determine the ground rules for operating the contract. The meeting had to be adjourned as “Mr Bouch failed to appear.”<sup>58</sup> His excuse was “pressure of business,” and, of course, this was probably due to the time he was currently spending on the Peebles Railway.

Bouch promised that the CJR would be ready for opening in September 1855, and the Board began to recruit staff in readiness. However, the railway did not open until 14 March 1856, six months late, with a rather motley staff since most of the original recruits had drifted away.<sup>59</sup> Part of the delay had been due to the petulance of a major landowner, Lady Willoughby d’Eresby, who refused the CJR Board access to a water supply when they turned down her request for a private station. In the end, a deep well had to be dug on land at Crieff station.

### **Receipts from four Bouch Railways**

The first full year of operation of the PRC saw receipts of £7,854, or £8 per week per mile (pwpm). By 1860, the fifth and final year of direct management by the PRC Board before the line was leased to the NBR, the receipts from passenger and goods traffic show that the railway had made considerable progress since it opened. The 1860 income is given in Table 5-7, and is compared with the receipts for the other Bouch railways we have considered. Despite the problems that the other lines suffered at the hands of Bouch during the construction phase, in the

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<sup>58</sup> CJRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.56) 12/9/1854.

<sup>59</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.118-20.

long run they were all reasonably successful and profitable. The Peebles Railway had by now comfortably reached the initial revenue target of £10,000 or £10 pwpm (Chapter 4, p.53), which had been promised to shareholders by Bathgate, and which would make possible a dividend of 5 per cent. The results for the Crieff Junction were similar, while the St. Andrews and Leven lines

PASSENGERS					GENERAL GOODS	COAL OTHER MINERALS	ANIMALS	
1 <sup>st</sup>	2 <sup>nd</sup>	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Season	Mail/Parcels				
£1,321	£1,373	£2,526	£45	£406	£3,225	£2,836	£136	£165
Total Passenger Trains					£5,671	Total Goods Trains		£6,362
TOTAL PEEBLES RAILWAY (19 miles) £12,033 or £12.18 pwpm								
£474	£342	£1,075	N/A	£173	£1,089	£396 (incl. Minerals)		£50
Total Passenger Trains					£2,064	Total Goods Trains		£1,535
TOTAL ST. ANDREWS RAILWAY (4 miles) £3,599 or £17.30 pwpm								
£410	£410	£1,470	N/A	£221	£2,167	£628	£42	£46
Total Passenger Trains					£2,511	Total Goods Trains		£2,883
TOTAL LEVEN RAILWAY (6 miles) £5,394 or £17.29 pwpm								
£355	£510	£905	N/A	£138	£2,188	£1,255 (incl. Minerals)		£84
Total Passenger Trains					£1,908	Total Goods Trains		£3,527
TOTAL CRIEFF JUNCTION RAILWAY (9 miles) £5,435 or £11.61 pwpm								

Table 5-7. Receipts of four Bouch Railways in 1860.<sup>60</sup>

were even better. The Leven performance is especially noteworthy, since the line does not appear to have had any great geographical or managerial advantages. It is therefore frustrating that the Leven Minute Books have not survived to provide us with clues as to the reasons for these good results.

<sup>60</sup> P.P LVII 1861, pp.14-17.

There is no doubt that Bouch retained the trust of the Peebles Directors right up to the amalgamation with the NBR in 1876. Confident about the standard of construction of the Peebles Railway in which he was a shareholder, his persuasive argument at the 1860 Wharnccliffe meeting—that the PRC was worth much more than the NBR offer—was instrumental in defeating the takeover attempt.<sup>61</sup> Subsequent events proved him right. It would appear that the difficulties which the Leven and Crieff Junction Railways faced in their dealings with Bouch were not due to his incompetence as an engineer. Rather, it was a case of an ambitious man in great demand, who wrongly took on more work than he could possibly handle. Trying to look after the Leven and Crieff Junction Railways in parallel with the PR, it is not surprising that Bouch failed to give proper attention to all of them.

That the Peebles Railway seems not to have suffered from his inattention is perhaps a tribute to the managerial competence of the PRC Board and its Secretary, John Bathgate, who kept him up to the mark. It is also just possible that Bouch had a greater respect for the PRC Board—because of the number of aristocrats and Members of Parliament who sat on it—than he accorded to the Boards of his other Scottish clients.

As to his engineering ability, Bouch showed considerable ingenuity in his concept for the world's first 'roll-on roll-off' train ferry across the Firth of Forth (Figs.5-3 and 5-4). His 'floating railway' began operating in February 1850, and remained in use for 40 years until the opening of the Forth Railway Bridge in March 1890. The double-ended paddle ferry *Leviathan* carried a maximum of 34 loaded wagons between Granton and Burntisland at a speed of 5 knots. "During her first ten years in service, over 75,000 wagons were carried every year," and Bouch's arrangement of winches, girders, platforms and slipways allowed the *Leviathan* to be loaded and unloaded at any state of the tide.<sup>62</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit* (ref.26) 21/1/1860.

<sup>62</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.48) p.61.

More evidence of Bouch's skill is to be found on the South Durham & Lancashire Union Railway. Fifty miles long, this line was built to carry heavy loads of iron ore from the Furness district to the ironworks of Middlesbrough, returning with Durham coke. Bouch designed two iron viaducts for this railway, Deepdale in Durham and Belah (Fig.5-5) in Cumbria, built between 1857 and 1861 at a cost per foot of less than a quarter of Brunel's Chepstow and Saltash bridges. Still in service a century later,<sup>63</sup> these long viaducts were spectacular examples of engineering by Thomas Bouch, and "should redound to his honour as some offset to the obloquy he subsequently incurred through the failure of his bridge over the Tay."<sup>64</sup>

In summing up, we have seen that as far as the Peebles Railway was concerned, none of the criticisms of John and David Thomas applied to Bouch's performance as an engineer. At St Andrews, the deficiencies of the line were partly due to a cheese-paring budget, but there is no doubt that at Leven and Crieff the problems were almost entirely of Bouch's making. David St.J. Thomas' "shocking service" is not too strong a condemnation here, but his use of the word "inept" when criticising Bouch's engineering skills is completely unjustified. For, as we have seen, Bouch was responsible for a number of innovative and cost-effective solutions to the problems he faced during his career, which opened up the benefits of rail transport to less populated areas of the country.

The names of William Chambers and Walter Thorburn have already appeared, together with John Bathgate, as co-promoters of the PRC. In the next chapter we shall look at the backgrounds of all three men, to show not only their contributions towards the success of the PR, but also their considerable efforts in promoting the advancement of Peebles.

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<sup>63</sup> The line was closed in the wake of the 1953 Beeching Report '*The Re-shaping of British Railways*', that recommended the shutting down of some 250 unprofitable train services.

<sup>64</sup> J. Simmons, *The Victorian Railway* (London, 1991) p.28.

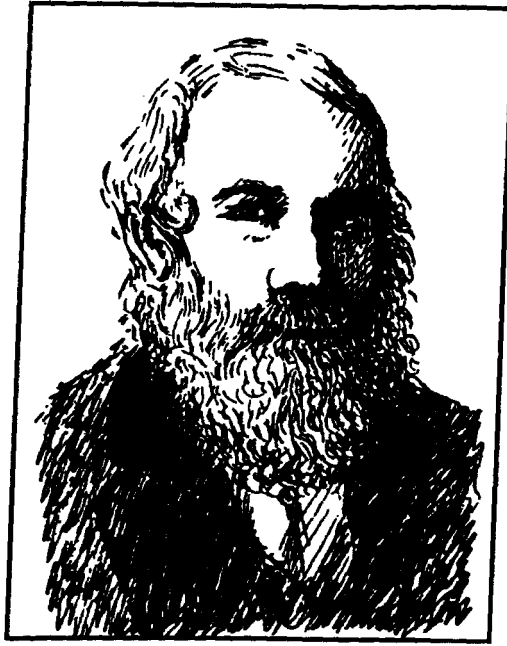


Fig.5-1. Sir Thomas Bouch, CE, 1822-1880.<sup>65</sup>

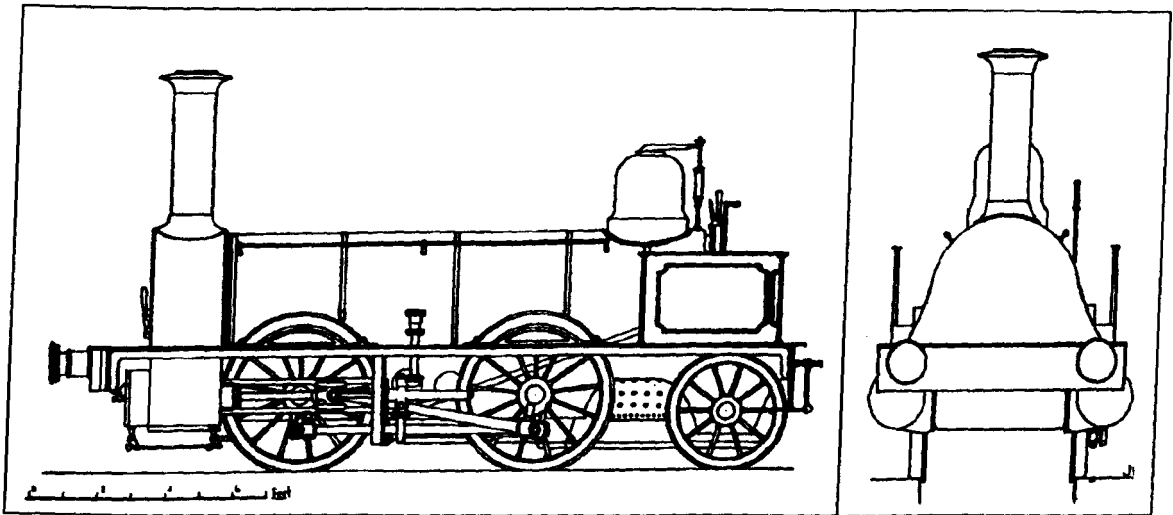


Fig.5-2. Hawthorn of Leith 0-4-2 locomotive, similar to *Neidpath Castle* and *Roslin Castle*.<sup>66</sup>

<sup>65</sup> Illustration from J.Thomas, *The North British Railway* (Newton Abbot, 1969) Vol 1, p.141.

<sup>66</sup> *ibid.*, Vol.1, p.235.

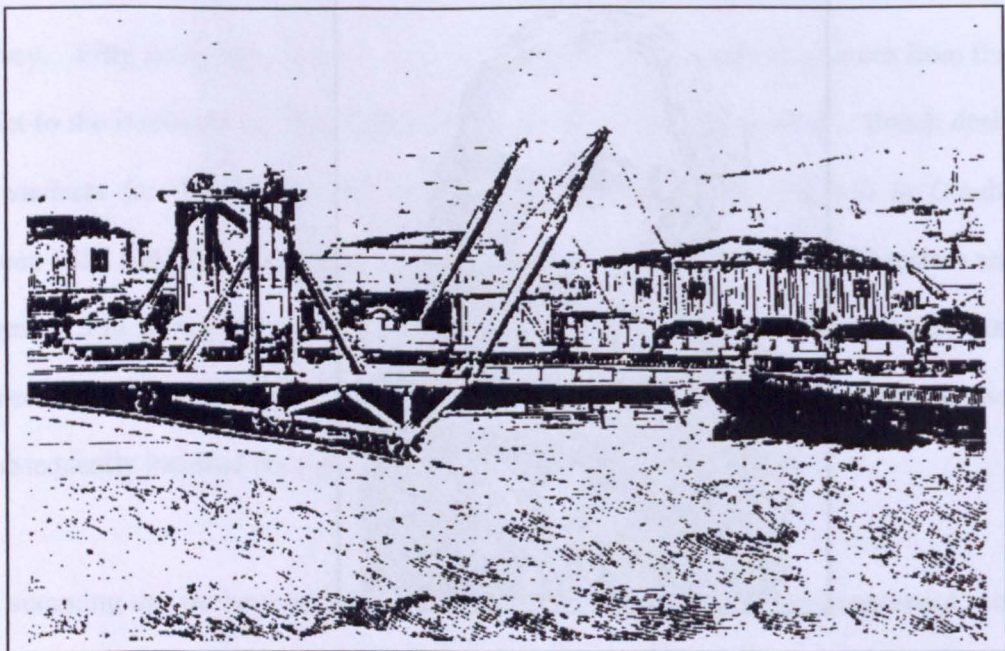


Fig.5-3. Bouch’s ‘flying bridge’ and the wagon ferry *Leviathan* in Granton Harbour.<sup>67</sup>



Fig.5-4. View of the ‘flying bridge’ on the Burntisland slipway.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>67</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.65) Vol.1, p.141.

<sup>68</sup> Illustration from Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.48) p.64.





Fig.5-5. Bouch's Belah Viaduct. (painted by J.O. Brown)<sup>69</sup>

<sup>69</sup> Illustration from Freeman, M.J., *Railways and the Victorian Imagination* (London, 1999) p.227. Although primarily built for mineral traffic, the Belah viaduct is shown by the artist with a mixed passenger and goods train going across it.





## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES OF THE PROMOTERS OF THE PEEBLES RAILWAY

### Introduction

A trio of enterprising men lived in Peebles in mid-Victorian Scotland, united in their desire for the advancement of the town. Their calibre was such that they would surely have been successful wherever they found themselves, and in whatever professions they had chosen to follow. That they should have been together in the same space and time proved to be singularly propitious for the Royal Burgh. In earlier chapters we have seen how Bathgate, Chambers and Thorburn were primarily responsible for bringing to Peebles the benefits of rail transport, and thereby triggering the consequences that followed, namely industry, tourism and growth. But they contributed much more than this to advance the fortunes of Peebles, and this chapter will provide further details of the three friends, whose portraits are shown in Fig.6-1.

### John Bathgate, lawyer and company secretary

John Bathgate was born in Fountainbridge, Edinburgh on 10 August 1809, the only son of Alexander and Frances Bathgate. Frances died when John was six years old. His father remarried soon afterwards, and in due course John gained a half-brother, James Duncan Bathgate, who was later to become his partner in business. John was in his final year at the Royal High School of Edinburgh, when, in the spring of 1822, his father was appointed Master of the Peebles Burgh School.<sup>1</sup> The following autumn Bathgate began his studies at Edinburgh University, where he spent the next four years reading English Literature. There is no evidence that he ever graduated, but it was fairly common at this time to leave the University without taking a degree.<sup>2</sup> On leaving Edinburgh he assisted his father in the School, and acted as part-time tutor to the children of a neighbouring landowner. According to Scott, Bathgate also developed a semi-professional interest in surveying, and, in addition to laying out the track of a proposed local

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<sup>1</sup> S.A. Scott, *John Bathgate: a Sketch of his Life and Times* (Peebles, 1977) p.6.

<sup>2</sup> Personal communication from Ms Eileen Ferguson, Edinburgh University Archives, 8/11/2001.

road, he was employed to survey several farms on the Hay and Naesmyth estates near Peebles.<sup>3</sup> He thus became known to a number of local landowners, who were to be of importance to him later in his career.

In 1831, Bathgate began an apprenticeship with J. & W. Dymock, a firm of solicitors in Edinburgh, where he qualified in 1835.<sup>4</sup> Soon after, he went into partnership with John Wilson as ‘Writers and Land Surveyors’, in an office at that end of the Peebles High Street known as the West Port. The partnership lasted only a short time, as the young and ambitious Bathgate soon found that “his partner did not give that attention to business which was necessary to ensure success.”<sup>5</sup> Once Wilson had moved out, Bathgate’s private legal practice grew steadily, and he also amassed an impressive list of public appointments over the years.

Writer and Notary Public (1835-63)	Clerk to the Parish Church Heritors (1835-63)
Procurator Fiscal <sup>*</sup> (1839-63)	Clerk to the Commissioners of Supply (1843-63)
Clerk to the Trustees of Turnpike & Statute Labour Roads (1843-63)	
Town Councillor (1850-53)	Secretary, Peebles Railway Company (1852-63)
Town Clerk (1853-63)	Burgh Assessor (1853-63)
Agent for the Union Bank of Scotland (1855-63)	Director, Peebles Savings Society (1856-63)
Clerk of the Peebles Institution (1859-63)	
Secretary, Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway Company (1861-63)	
<i>Other appointments listed by Chambers in ‘Peebles and its Neighbourhood’ pp.107-15:-</i>	
Clerk to the Commissioners of Police	Clerk to the Peeblesshire Prison Board
Clerk to the Widow and Orphan Society	Clerk to the Whipman Friendly Society
<sup>*</sup> The public prosecutor in the Peebles Sheriff Court, equivalent to an English County Court.	

Table 6-1 John Bathgate’s Peeblesshire Appointments.

<sup>3</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) pp.9-10.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p.10.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.12.

According to Slater's Commercial Directory of 1837, there were already four other firms of solicitors in Peebles. It was therefore necessary for Bathgate to establish his legal practice by whatever means possible, and this explains why he took on the poorly-paid appointment of Clerk to the Heritors of the Parish Church in 1835. In Scottish Law, the heritors were landowners responsible for the upkeep of the Church buildings, the Parish Schools and the administration of the poor—they were the kind of men Bathgate needed to cultivate. His subsequent appointments of Procurator-Fiscal and Clerk to the Commissioners of Supply were further important steps in the advancement of his career.

As Fiscal, Bathgate was responsible for deciding which cases—reported by magistrates or the police—should be prosecuted in the Peeblesshire Sheriff Court. In this capacity he regularly appeared before Sheriff Principal Napier and Sheriff Substitute Burnett, who both had a high opinion of Bathgate as a man and as a lawyer.<sup>6</sup> February 1845 saw the first issue of the local newspaper founded by Bathgate, the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, which regularly ran accounts of the Sheriff Court proceedings. These reports kept him in the public eye, but this was not his reason for becoming a newspaper proprietor. The paper began publication at this time in order to give prominence to the Chambers' improvement scheme for Peebles—discussed later in this chapter—of which Bathgate was an enthusiastic supporter.<sup>7</sup> A further possible reason was to assist in the promotion of the 1845 Edinburgh & Peebles Railway: Bathgate was one of the two Solicitors for the Bill.

Administration of Scottish counties remained in the hands of the Commissioners of Supply until the formation of the County Councils in 1889. The Commissioners were landowners possessed of landed property worth at least £100 annually. At this time taxation and administration went together, as rates in the countryside—as opposed to those of the

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<sup>6</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (P.Adv.), 15/8/1863. Speech by Sheriff Napier at Bathgate's Testimonial Dinner before his departure to New Zealand.

<sup>7</sup> *ibid.*, 27/9/1879. Reminiscences of ex-Provost John Stirling.

towns—"were paid exclusively by the proprietors of land."<sup>8</sup> To be appointed Clerk to the Commissioners meant that Bathgate was closely involved with the people who mattered socially and politically in Peeblesshire. It also meant that when the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) was first publicly mooted in 1852, these were the men who would be vital in providing the local financial backing to ensure that the Peebles Railway Bill would pass the scrutiny of Parliament. The PRC Provisional Committee contained many of the Peeblesshire Commissioners, who had built up a considerable respect for the ability and shrewdness of Bathgate since he had become their Clerk nine years earlier.

Bathgate's career and duties as a railway lawyer have already been covered in Chapter 4. It was therefore a considerable shock to the Directors of the PRC and the Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway (LL&DR) when their able Secretary suddenly resigned. In the spring of 1863, completely out of the blue, Bathgate received the offer of a 5-year appointment as Colonial Manager of the newly established Bank of Otago in Dunedin, New Zealand, at a salary of £1,500 per annum.<sup>9</sup> He was apparently subject to chronic bronchitis during the Peeblesshire winters, and his decision to emigrate with his wife and family was partly influenced by the hope that a change of climate would be good for his health.<sup>10</sup>

Bathgate's imminent departure was keenly felt in Peebles, as was evidenced by the testimonial dinners and meetings held in his honour, and by the many gifts he received. These included "a Louis XIV ormolu clock, a service of silver plate suitably inscribed, a magnificent epergne and a complete coffee set."<sup>11</sup> The Town Council was fulsome in its praise for his work for the Burgh, and presented Bathgate with a copy of a Council Minute that thanked him for what he had done for Peebles, deeply regretted his leaving, and wished him health, happiness and prosperity in

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<sup>8</sup> J.W. Buchan, (ed.) *A History of Peeblesshire* (Glasgow, 1925) Vol.1, p.102.

<sup>9</sup> Bathgate had been the Peebles Agent for the Union Bank of Scotland since 1855.

<sup>10</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) pp.27-8.

<sup>11</sup> *ibid.*, p.29.

New Zealand. This minute was “engrossed upon Vellum, signed by all the members of Council and the Burgh Seal affixed.”<sup>12</sup> At the same Council meeting, Bathgate’s half brother, James Duncan Bathgate, was appointed Town Clerk. James was a qualified solicitor whom John had taken into partnership, and he not only took over John’s legal practice but also succeeded him as Secretary of the PRC and the LL&DR. When the Bathgate emigrants—consisting of husband, wife, ten children and two female servants—finally left Peebles for New Zealand on 12 August 1863, a large crowd assembled at the railway station to see them off.

As might have been expected from this sketch of his career in Peebles, John Bathgate was equally successful in his new surroundings.<sup>13</sup> By mutual agreement, Bathgate left the Otago Bank in 1867 to become Managing Editor of the *Otago Daily Times* and Chairman of the Dunedin Waterworks Company. In April 1870, he was admitted as Solicitor and Barrister before the Supreme Court of New Zealand. From there Bathgate went into politics, being elected Member of Parliament for Dunedin in 1871, and the following year he joined the New Zealand Government as Minister of Justice and Commissioner of Stamps. Bathgate resigned his Parliamentary seat in 1874, on being offered the post of Resident Magistrate and District Judge in Dunedin. This allowed him to be closer to his family and to his home, ‘*The Glen*’, set in 60 acres and named after the well-known estate owned by Charles Tennant in Peeblesshire. He had one final venture into newspaper ownership in 1875, when he founded the Dunedin weekly paper *The Saturday Advertiser*.<sup>14</sup> He died at Dunedin on 21 September 1886 at the age of 77.

Apart from his negotiating skills, integrity and innate ability, what shines through in his time in Peebles is John Bathgate’s love for his adopted town, and his determination to serve it

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<sup>12</sup> Peebles Town Council Minute Book, 24/7/1863.

<sup>13</sup> Most of the following details come from the monograph by Sheila Scott. There are also some records of Bathgate’s life in New Zealand and his photograph (Fig.6-1) is preserved in the Hocken Library, University of Otago in Dunedin. I am grateful to Ms Kirsten Thomlinson, Assistant Archivist at the Library, for her help.

<sup>14</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.51.

faithfully. As he said at a testimonial meeting held in his honour in December 1862, "I have an anxious desire to promote the welfare of Peebles. Whatever I have been asked to do, I have at least always tried to do."<sup>15</sup> We have already seen how true this was by the large number of local appointments held by Bathgate, many of which were unpaid. At a time when the money required for carrying out municipal improvements, or for charitable purposes, was mainly raised from the general public, his name appears on virtually all the published subscription lists. What we have seen in John Bathgate is the antithesis of the greedy, grasping lawyer. Among the many tributes paid to him at a testimonial dinner before he left Peebles—attended by most of the town and county notables—was this from Sir Graham Montgomery, Member of Parliament for Peeblesshire, Convener of the Commissioners of Supply, and former Chairman of the PRC. "During all the course of his public life he has been foremost in every good work that had been started and carried forward in the county. No gentleman has ever left the county carrying with him so many kindly and heartfelt wishes for his happiness and prosperity."<sup>16</sup>

In his reply, Bathgate said that although much had been achieved "since the burgh had woken up from its long sleep," there were still things required in order to advance the town.

1. A public park was needed for the recreation of the community and their visitors.
2. An increased supply of water was vital to meet the needs of a growing population.
3. The parish churchyard was in need of renovation.
4. The strip of ground between the Caledonian Station and the River Tweed should be planted with trees to help "atone for the outrage on the landscape made by the railway."
5. Local taxation should be increased and paid cheerfully by the residents. In the past, the Town Council had been constrained in its burghal expenditure "by the limits of their little income, rather than by the pressing necessities of the town."

"These counsels he left them as a sort of legacy."

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<sup>15</sup> *P.Adv. op.cit.*, (ref.6) 20/12/1862.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, 15/8/1863 The paper devoted six full page columns to the "Departure of John Bathgate Esq.," and an account of the Testimonial Dinner.

The New Zealand Government granted Bathgate a 12-months leave of absence on full salary in June 1879, and he returned to Peebles in September for a first and only visit. After a lapse of sixteen years, he found that the first four items of his 'legacy' had been achieved, but there had been little improvement in the Burgh revenues. Cheerful ratepayers had been an unduly optimistic notion. Under the headline "Complimentary Banquet to His Honour Judge Bathgate", the *Advertiser* reported on an event held on 23 September in the Tontine Hotel. The banquet had been arranged "at the immediate instance of the Provost, Magistrates and Town Council," and was attended by upwards of one hundred gentlemen, with Sir Graham Montgomery in the Chair.<sup>17</sup> The guests included Sir Thomas Bouch and Dr. Peddie, a consultant who had once treated Bathgate's wife during a serious illness, and who was the current President of the Royal College of Physicians of Edinburgh.

The principal speaker was Bathgate's friend of 57 years, John Stirling, who had been Provost of Peebles from 1847 to 1849 and again between 1855 and 1864.<sup>18</sup> Stirling was delighted to see Sir Thomas Bouch, "who so ably planned the railway, which others had declared physically impossible," and which "was the turning point of the prosperity of Peebles and its neighbourhood." For the benefit of the younger diners, Stirling summarised the history of Peebles from early in the century, emphasising how the efforts of Bathgate, Chambers and Thorburn had put new life into the burgh. This was a wide-ranging and illuminating speech by Stirling, and information from it will be found throughout this chapter. He was a primary witness, who had been at the centre of affairs in Peebles for most of his adult life.

This banquet and the complimentary speeches demonstrated that even after a long absence, Bathgate was still remembered with admiration, affection and gratitude by the people of Peebles.

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<sup>17</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.6) 27/9/1879. The report covered 7½ columns of the broadsheet newspaper.

<sup>18</sup> J.L. Brown and I.C. Lawson, *History of Peebles 1850-1990* (Edinburgh, 1990) p.355.

### **William Chambers—publisher, author, railway director and philanthropist**

William Chambers was born in 1800 into a family that had resided in Peebles since the thirteenth century.<sup>19</sup> The family home was in Biggiesknowe, a section of one of the three main thoroughfares that made up the Royal Burgh of Peebles (see map Chapter 2, Fig.2-2, and the photograph, Fig.6-2). His father, James Chambers was the employer of a number of handloom weavers, as well as being the agent for two Glasgow cotton merchants. William and his brother Robert, born in 1802, were educated at the local Burgh and Grammar schools. Robert, especially, benefited from his father's set of the fourth edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, which he unearthed in the attic when he was eleven years old.<sup>20</sup>

After some business misjudgements that bankrupted his father, the family was forced to sell up and leave Peebles in 1814. William was then 14 years old, and almost immediately he became an apprentice to an Edinburgh bookseller, John Sutherland.<sup>21</sup> During his apprenticeship he remained financially independent of his family—who were now living between Musselburgh and Dalkeith, some miles outside Edinburgh—and for four years he housed, fed and clothed himself on a wage of just four shillings a week. “His lodgings in the West Port cost him 1s. 6d. per week, 1s. 9d. he paid for his food, and 9d. was reserved for miscellaneous expenses.”<sup>22</sup> In his fifth and final year he received an extra shilling. It was during this period in his life that he learned the value of thrift, a lesson he never forgot. At the end of his apprenticeship in 1819, rather than accepting a job with Sutherland he decided to set up on his own.

With a capital consisting of his last week's wage, he leased a tiny shop about 12 feet square, for which the rent was £10 a year, and so began his career as a bookseller and printer in Leith

<sup>19</sup> William de la Chaumbre, Baillie and Burgess of Peebles, appeared in the Ragman Roll of 1296 when he paid homage to Edward I of England.

<sup>20</sup> *Dictionary of National Biography, (DNB)* Vol IV, p.23-4.

<sup>21</sup> S.A. Scott, *William Chambers of Glenormiston*, (Biggar, 1997) pp.7-8.

<sup>22</sup> *DNB, op.cit.*, (ref.20) p.27.



Walk, Edinburgh.<sup>23</sup> His stock in trade consisted of books valued at £10, given to him on credit by “the agent for a London bookseller, to whom Chambers had been useful.”<sup>24</sup> He also bought an old printing press for £3, on which he printed a number of small publications including one he had written himself, *A History of Gypsies*. After this modest beginning his business grew steadily, and in the spring of 1823 he moved to larger premises in Broughton Street. There he wrote a history of the machinery of government in Scotland before the Treaty of Union in 1707, and, together with his brother Robert, *A Gazetteer of Scotland* that was published in 1830.

After a short spell as a junior clerk, Robert—on the recommendation of his brother—had set up as a bookseller in Leith Walk in 1816. They went into partnership in 1832, which marked the start of the printing and publishing firm of W. & R. Chambers of Edinburgh, a company that was soon to become a household name, not only in Britain, but also throughout the English-speaking world. William with his business acumen and Robert with his literary gifts complemented each other well. The *Chambers Edinburgh Journal*, which appeared in 1832 in weekly issues costing 1½d., “was the first really successful medium of cheap, popular culture,”<sup>25</sup> and its circulation quickly rose to 80,000. It was followed by a wide range of educational works, ranging from the *Chambers’ Dictionary* and *Encyclopaedia* to numerous schoolroom primers and wall maps. An advertisement in the first issue of the *Advertiser* gives an indication of the wide range of publications currently available from the firm.<sup>26</sup>

Unlike so many contemporary businesses, from the start the brothers paid for everything in cash, refusing to trade beyond their means. As publishers of the eponymous *Edinburgh Journal*, *Encyclopaedia* and *Dictionary*, they acquired a formidable reputation in the world of publishing,

<sup>23</sup> *Railway Times* 14/10/1876 p.934. Reminiscences during the final PRC half-yearly meeting.

<sup>24</sup> *DNB*, *op.cit.*, (ref.20) p.27.

<sup>25</sup> G.S. Pryde, *Scotland from 1603 to the present day* (Edinburgh, 1962) p.171.

<sup>26</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.6) 4/2/1845. Chambers’ *Edinburgh Journal*; *Information for the People*; *Cyclopaedia of English Literature*; *Miscellany of useful and entertaining Tracts*; *People’s Editions* [of cheap books]; *Educational Courses*; *Schoolroom Maps*, available from the Chambers’ premises in Edinburgh and Glasgow, and from Agents in London, Dublin and Peebles.

having been able to attract staff of a high calibre. Indeed, the business was so successful that in 1849 William was able to buy the 842-acre estate of Glenormiston near Peebles for “£25,000, with an additional amount of £500 for the furniture in the mansion-house.”<sup>27</sup> Now a Peeblesshire landowner, William became involved in the administration of the County as a Commissioner of Supply and a Justice of the Peace.

“In the year 1840, William and Robert Chambers were created burgesses [freemen] of their native town. The brothers, grateful for this mark of respect, set themselves to devise how they could wake up the latent energy of the burgh.”<sup>28</sup> An article had appeared in the *Edinburgh Journal* extolling the improvements that had been carried through in St Andrews by the indefatigable Provost, Hugh Lyon Playfair. Soon after, William Chambers proposed the big development scheme for Peebles, towards which he promised “great material and moral support.” The object was to improve the appearance of Peebles by lowering and ‘macadamizing’ the streets, widening the pavements, and “sweeping away ugly outside stairs and outshots.” The introduction of a system of drainage for the first time, and having piped water into the houses, would make for a healthier environment. It took a great deal of educational effort by Chambers and Bathgate to convince the public to back them in this ambitious project, and it was as part of this process of education that Bathgate established the *Advertiser*. The scheme was successfully carried through, and ex-Provost Stirling was correct in pointing out that “there is no doubt that these improvements of 35 years ago were the first steps in the resuscitation of the burgh.”<sup>29</sup> Yet, there remains a touch of nostalgia in the comment that “the improvements of 1846 swept away the last relics of former days—outside stairs, prominent wells, arched pends—and enforced a uniformity to which our fathers were strangers.”<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.21) p.35.

<sup>28</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.6) 27/9/1879 From John Stirling’s speech at the Bathgate banquet [supra].

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, 27/9/1879.

<sup>30</sup> Rev. A. Williamson, *Glimpses of Peebles* (Selkirk, 1895) p.vii. . A pend is a vaulted or arched passageway leading from the street to the back court of a block of houses.

Having seen that there had been few apparent changes to Peebles since he had left it as a boy, William was keenly interested in attempts to build a railway linking Peebles with Edinburgh. He was already familiar with the railway scene, as the *Edinburgh Journal* regularly published railway articles of sufficient quality and interest that Robertson used quotations from them 150 years later.<sup>31</sup> In a letter to *The Scotsman* newspaper on 11 September 1839, Chambers had criticised—from personal experience—the decision of the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway (E&GR) to lay the permanent way on stone blocks instead of wooden sleepers. Not only were they noisy, but they also caused damage to the trains. The E&GR directors were intransigent but Chambers was right, and the stone blocks soon had to be replaced.<sup>32</sup> Crucially, Chambers had been active in the promotion of the Edinburgh & Peebles Railway in 1845 as Convener of its Management Sub-Committee, and he was very aware that this venture had failed because it was too expensive to gain sufficient local support. The November 1851 meeting with John Bathgate and William Thorburn (Chapter 4, pp.51-2) bore fruit because they all agreed that it would be vital to avoid any unnecessary expense, if their new proposal were to receive the necessary financial backing from local investors.

Chambers was rather cautious about accepting membership of the Peebles Railway Provisional Committee formed during the public meeting in April 1852. The Minutes of that meeting (the first entry in the Company's Minute Book, 13/4/1852) contained a motion by Chambers "that no member of the Committee will be held to have incurred any personal liability by accepting the appointment." Once the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) was incorporated the following month, Chambers subscribed for only 500 of the £10 shares, the smallest number of any of the interim Board Members.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>31</sup> C.J.A Robertson, *The Origins of the Scottish Railway System: 1722-1844* (Edinburgh, 1984) pp.118 and 131.

<sup>32</sup> D. Martin and A.A. Maclean, *Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway Guidebook* (Glasgow, 1992) p.38.

<sup>33</sup> *Railway Times*, 14/5/1853 p.506.

As we saw in Chapter 4, Chambers fought to retain the independence of the Peebles Railway in the face of overtures from the NBR, and became Chairman after Sir Graham Montgomery felt obliged to resign when the Wharnccliffe Meeting in 1860 failed to approve the amalgamation. However, there was no animosity between the two men, and it was Montgomery who later seconded Chambers' motion to accept the NBR terms for the subsequent lease of the line, acknowledging that he had been wrong in backing the amalgamation attempt. Chambers' formidable negotiating powers were still evident in 1875 when the final amalgamation agreement was being discussed (Fig.6-4). And, after the railway was finally taken over by the NBR in 1876, Chambers still took an active interest in local enterprise. For example, he was invited to lay the foundation stone of a magnificent building in 1878, the Peebles Hydropathic, which, when completed in 1881, had cost £70,000,<sup>34</sup> almost as much as the entire Peebles Railway.

A successful businessman, we have seen that William Chambers was also an author in his own right. "His writings exhibit strong common sense, and he knew how to make a subject interesting."<sup>35</sup> He produced a definitive *History of Peeblesshire*, a memoir of his brother Robert and numerous essays, as well as two books on railway topics. One was a description of Peebles and its railway. Drawing on his experience as a railway director, Chambers also wrote a well-received monograph on the promotion and management of railway companies.<sup>36</sup> Favourably reviewed by the *Railway News* after its publication<sup>37</sup> it was still of interest to Ferneyhough, who was writing over a hundred years later about the development of railways in Britain.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to his publishing and railway interests, between 1865 and 1869 Chambers served with distinction as Lord Provost of Edinburgh. At this time, the Old Town of Edinburgh had

<sup>34</sup> H. Thom, *The Peebles Hydro: A Short History*. (Peebles, 1996) p.1.

<sup>35</sup> *DNB*, *op.cit.*, (ref.20) p.29.

<sup>36</sup> W. Chambers, *About Railways*, (Edinburgh, 1866).

<sup>37</sup> "I daresay that even those most conversant with our railway system will find useful information and suggestions in this little treatise."

<sup>38</sup> F. Ferneyhough, *The History of Railways in Britain*, (Reading, 1975) p.145.

some of the worst slums in Britain, and Chambers was instrumental in obtaining and implementing an Act “for the improvement of the City of Edinburgh,” which received the Royal Assent in June 1867. With characteristic energy and the backing of Dr Littlejohn, the Medical Officer of Health, Chambers forced through the slum clearances in the face of considerable opposition. Dank, unhealthy alleyways were replaced by broad streets, and, in 1871, one of these was named Chambers Street, where a statue was erected in his honour. The death rate of Edinburgh, which was 26,000 per annum when Chambers became Lord Provost in 1865, had fallen to 18,000 by 1882. “Probably no Lord Provost of Edinburgh since the famous Thomas Drummond [who presided over the New Town proposals] has effected greater changes on the face of Edinburgh than those associated with the civic reign of William Chambers.”<sup>39</sup>

Despite his careful use of money, William Chambers was a notable philanthropist, no doubt due in part because he and his wife Harriet had not been blessed with a family.<sup>40</sup> He gifted the Chambers Institution in Peebles to the town in 1859 (Fig.6-3), “for purposes of Social Improvement.”<sup>41</sup> This had once been the town house of the fourth Duke of Queensberry, which Chambers had re-modelled to form a museum and art gallery, reading room, lecture hall and a library, to which he contributed 10,000 books. Chambers also spent between £20,000 and £30,000 in restoring the southern aisle of St Giles’ Cathedral, the High Kirk of Edinburgh.<sup>42</sup>

Already a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, in 1872 he received an honorary LL.D from Edinburgh University, and he was subsequently referred to as Dr Chambers. Having earlier refused a knighthood as Lord Provost of Edinburgh, he was offered a baronetcy at the beginning of May 1883, but he died on 20 May before he could receive it.<sup>43</sup> Chambers was accorded a public funeral in St Giles’ on 25 May, attended by a congregation of three thousand

<sup>39</sup> R. Rodger, *The Transformation of Edinburgh*. (Cambridge, 2001) p.241.

<sup>40</sup> Of their three children, one was stillborn and two died within a few days of their birth.

<sup>41</sup> W. Chambers, *A History of Peeblesshire* (Edinburgh, 1864) p.280-3.

<sup>42</sup> *DNB, op.cit.*, (ref.20) p.28.

<sup>43</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.21) pp.66-8.

people, which included “representatives of all the chief public corporations in Scotland.”<sup>44</sup> Afterwards, the funeral procession passed through crowded streets to Waverley Station, whence his body was conveyed to Peebles for burial under the shadow of the ruined tower of the twelfth century parish church. Chambers had begun rebuilding this tower, but he died before it had been completed.<sup>45</sup>

In his Will he left £5,000 to the college in Chambers Street that ultimately became Heriot-Watt University. Despite all the charitable gifts made during his lifetime, at his death the value of his estate was £91,629 13s. 3d.<sup>46</sup> (or almost £5½ million in current values). The quondam bookseller’s apprentice had certainly made his mark on society and the world of business.

### **Walter Thorburn - banker & woollen merchant**

Walter Thorburn was born in 1801, into a middle-class family living at Holylee in the Parish of Innerleithen, close to the Selkirkshire border. In 1815 he began a four-year apprenticeship with William Turnbull, a Galashiels textile merchant, for which his father paid an all-inclusive fee of £24.<sup>47</sup> Once he had finished his apprenticeship, Thorburn determined to set up in business for himself, and in 1821 he acquired a small shop in Peebles High Street where he sold woollens and other textiles. Over the years his business and his reputation grew, and he was elected to the Peebles Town Council in 1833, becoming Provost and Chief Magistrate between 1836 and 1838.

Very much the entrepreneur, Thorburn did not confine his activities to textiles. “The enterprises in which he was engaged were of a very multifarious description.”<sup>48</sup> For example, an advertisement in the local paper in November 1853 announced that he had three cargoes of guano, imported from South America, for sale to farmers. At this period, guano was in vogue as

<sup>44</sup> Scott, *op.cit.*, (ref.21) p.68.

<sup>45</sup> DNB, *op.cit.*, (ref.20) p.29.

<sup>46</sup> Inventory held in the National Archives of Scotland, Register House, Edinburgh. (SC70/1/224).

<sup>47</sup> Anon. *Thorburn Family History*, (TFH) (Peebles, 1965) p.5

<sup>48</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.6) 1/11/1853.

a more efficient fertiliser than farmyard manure, and despite the fact that it had to be shipped to Britain on the long voyage from Chile round Cape Horn, it was still a profitable trade. The inventory of his personal estate after his death reveals that he was part owner of two steamships, the *Wolf* and the *Lion*, with his brother-in-law James Grieve, a trustee under his Will.<sup>49</sup> It is quite possible that these were the ships involved in Thorburn's guano venture. Another advert in 1854 shows that he had now added silk to his range of textiles, and his shop was also selling rugs, shawls and garments in addition to various types of cloth. The sale of the High Street shop following Thorburn's move into the wholesale tweed business will be covered in Chapter 10, as well as the progress of that business after his death, under the management of his sons.

Thorburn became the Agent for the City of Glasgow Bank when it established a branch in Peebles in 1840—later transferring to the Bank of Scotland in 1857—so that he usually described himself as 'Banker and Merchant'. He also became the local agent for two insurance companies, Standard Life and The Insurance Company of Scotland.<sup>50</sup> Another appointment, secured in 1851, was that of distributor of Excise stamps for the counties of Peeblesshire and Selkirkshire.

According to the Thorburn Family History, Walter was also involved with the 1845 plan to bring the railway to Peebles.<sup>51</sup> As we have already seen, he played a large part in the formation of the Peebles Railway Company, of which he was a Director and shareholder until his death in 1867. In 1852, Thorburn was once more elected as a member of the Peebles Town Council, and one of his motives for standing again might well have been to promote the cause of the PRC within the Council. He also took a leading part in drumming up financial support for the railway in Peebles and district.

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<sup>49</sup> Thorburn's Will and Inventory are held in Register House, Edinburgh, (SC42/20/7).

In 1831, Thorburn had married Jane Grieve, who came from a shipping family in Greenock.

<sup>50</sup> *Slater's Commercial Directory of Scotland, 1867*. See also Appendix 2.

<sup>51</sup> *TFH op.cit.*, (ref.47) p.5.

Between 1857 and 1862 Thorburn was buying and selling land within the burgh, and there are eight entries under his name in the Peeblesshire Register of Sasines. He built a number of villas for sale at Springwood Terrace, on the south side of the River Tweed, as well as Springwood House for himself and his large family (Chapter 11). By that time, his wife Jane had produced eleven of their fourteen children. As the Editor of the *Peeblesshire Advertiser* later noted in Thorburn's obituary notice in the newspaper, "it was to him, in a much greater degree than any other one, that we are indebted for the beautiful suburb of Springhill."<sup>52</sup>

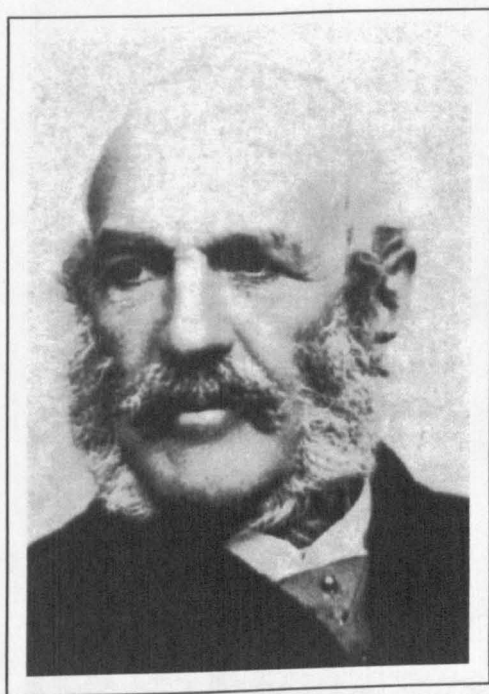
"Mr Thorburn, from small beginnings, rose to be one of the wealthiest and most influential men of 'light and leading' in the old burgh."<sup>53</sup> He died at Springwood House on 15 February 1867, leaving a considerable personal estate of £25,726 8s. 7d., which, apart from some minor insurance and shipping interests, had all been earned within his Peeblesshire interests. Three of his sons, Walter, Michael and William, continued in their father's footsteps in the woollen trade, with the result that the name of Thorburn remained a byword for quality in the production and sale of tweeds and worsteds (Chapter 10). Over several generations the Damdale, Damcroft and Tweedside mills employed a large number of male and female workers, whose wages did much to benefit the tradesmen of the Burgh.

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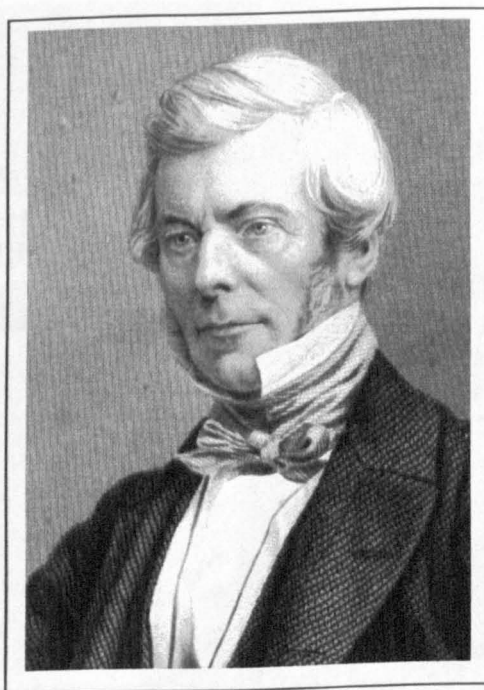
<sup>52</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.6) 23/2/1867.

<sup>53</sup> Williamson, *op.cit.*, (ref.30) p.217.

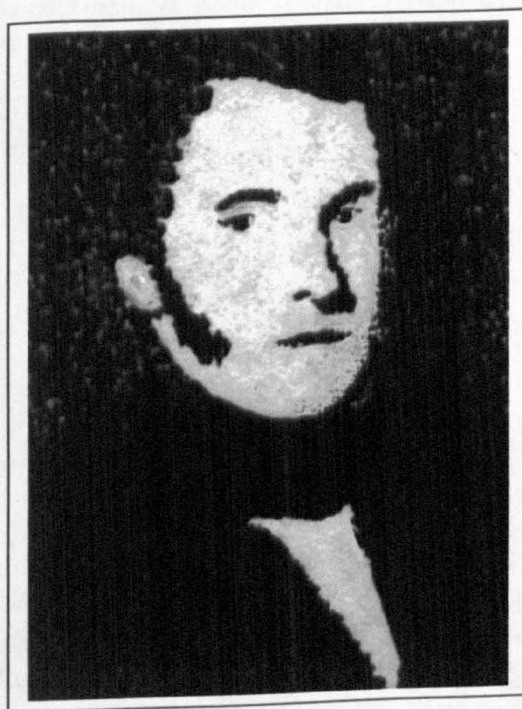




John Bathgate 1809-1886 Lawyer



William Chambers 1800-1883 Publisher



Walter Thorburn 1801-1867 Banker and Merchant

Fig.6-1. The progenitors of the Peebles Railway Company.<sup>54</sup>

<sup>54</sup> Portrait of Judge Bathgate courtesy of Hocken Library, Dunedin; that of Chambers courtesy of the Peebles Museum. The original Thorburn portrait is missing. This is a copy from a photocopy of the the Thorburn family History in the Scottish Borders Archives, Selkirk.



Fig.6-2. The house in Biggiesknowe where William Chambers was born.<sup>55</sup>

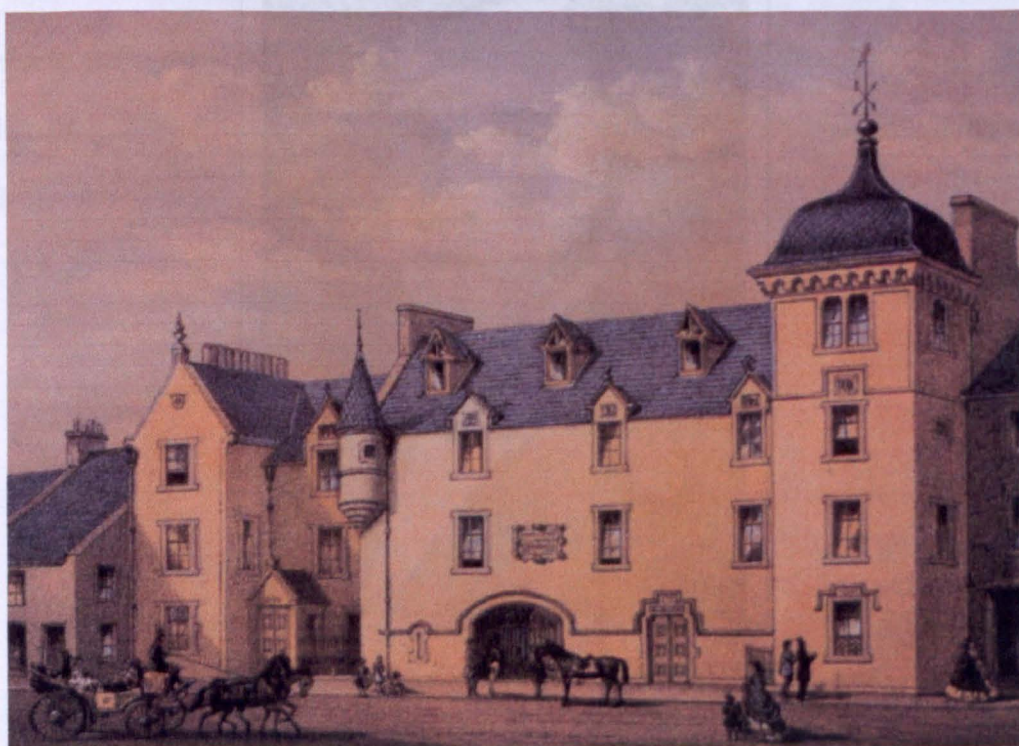


Fig.6-3. The Chambers Institution, gifted to Peebles in 1859 by William Chambers.<sup>56</sup>

<sup>55</sup> Photo by the author.

<sup>56</sup> From the painting in the Tweeddale Museum and Gallery.



At Edinburgh the seventh day of October  
 Eighteen hundred and seventy five  
 At a Meeting of the Directors of the Peebles Railway Company  
 Present  
 Dr. Chambers      Mr. Ramsay,      Mr. Muir.  
 Mr. Airdrie      Mr. Anderson.      Mr. Buchanan.  
 Mr. Duncan.

Dr. Chambers in the Chair.

The previous Minutes of Directors were read and approved of.  
 The Chairman stated that he had met Mr. Walker at his request on Monday last  
 and the proposal for Amalgamation had assumed the following shape:  
 Memorandum of terms of Amalgamation of Peebles  
 Railway with the North British Railway Company.

1. The Peebles Railway Company to be amalgamated with the North British Railway Company as from 1st August 1876.
2. The North British Railway Company to be entitled to any assets, and to be bound to pay any liabilities on Capital Account including Debentures.
3. The Preference shares of the Peebles Railway Company to become Preference Shares in the North British Railway Company, and to be secured in the same manner as the Ordinary Shares.
4. Ordinary Stock of the Peebles Railway Company to become Preferred Stock in the North British Railway Company bearing a special preferential Dividend of 8 per cent per annum secured by a lien on the Peebles Railway on such terms as may be equally agreed on.
5. The North British Railway Company will endeavour within five years from the Amalgamation to double the Peebles Railway from the Eok valley junctions to Hawthornston Station.
6. The North British Railway Company to promote a Bill for the amalgamation in the next Session and bear all expenses in relation thereto, the Peebles Railway Company consenting.
7. A formal Agreement to be adjusted by the Solicitors of the two Companies.
8. The foregoing subject to the approval of the two Boards and of the Shareholders in both Companies.
9. The North British Railway Company on the line between Eok Valley Junction and Hawthornston Junction being doubled to improve the Train Service over the Peebles Line.

The Secretary read a Telegram from Lord Elphinstone approving of the terms of the proposed arrangement and a letter from Mr. Fox also approving of the arrangement.

Fig.6-4. Draft Amalgamation Agreement between the PRC and NBR.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>57</sup> PRC Minute Book 7/10/1875. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/4). Chambers finalised the amalgamation terms with John Walker, the NBR Company Secretary. These terms were agreed by both Boards.



## THE RAILWAYS OF PEEBLES AND THEIR LAND NEGOTIATIONS

The acquisition of land was fundamental to the formation of a railway. We shall therefore now consider the relations between the Peebles Town Council and the three railway companies that not only needed land within the Parish, but also Council approval of their plans to use it. Of these, the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) was the most favoured by the Council. It was a local enterprise, and it was also the earliest of the local lines, ending the geographical isolation of Peebles by providing a reliable and relatively speedy link with Edinburgh. Since this line was situated mainly outside the Parish, we shall also look at the amount of land the PRC requisitioned from private owners in Peeblesshire and Midlothian. However, the purchase of private land by the North British Railway (NBR) and the Caledonian Railway (CR) outside the Parish of Peebles is not covered, as the NBR and CR Minute Books do not contain any of the details.

Most of the land required for the terminal station, engine shed and sidings of the Peebles Railway (PR) belonged to Sir Adam Hay. After some haggling, in 1854 the Company finally agreed to pay him £160 an acre for six acres of land near the Cross Kirk (see Chapter 2, Fig.2-2), which had an annual rental value as building land of about £6 an acre.<sup>1</sup> The Town Council owned a contiguous strip of land, only 0.292 of an acre in extent, but which was vital to the PRC. It was sold at the same £160 per acre valuation, for which the Council received about £47. £160 an acre seems a very reasonable price for land close to the town, and less than the usual asking price. For example, the Midland Railway had to pay £500 an acre for agricultural land at Kings Norton, seven miles from Birmingham, while in the 1850s, Lord Derby was getting £1,000 an acre for township properties in Lancashire.<sup>2</sup> We shall see in Chapter 15 that the Marquess of Ailesbury obtained £180 an acre for agricultural land in the North Riding of Yorkshire, which was previously let for only 24s. per acre per annum. In being ready to accept a modest price for

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<sup>1</sup> Acreage from the Register of Sasines, Peebles, 1851-55, and price from Town Council Minutes (TCM) of the meeting held on 28/8/1854.

<sup>2</sup> J.R. Kellett, *The Impact of Railways on Victorian Cities* (London, 1969). pp.414 and 179.

its small parcel of land, it should be remembered that the Council had strongly backed the PRC from the start and had bought shares in the railway. The Burgh Treasurer was also a shareholder and one of the two Auditors, while the Town Clerk was the PRC Secretary.

The Council saw that the promotion of the railway might stimulate migration into the attractive environment of Peebles, and in 1854 began the process of feuing Burgh land south of the River Tweed for house-building purposes. The land was to be held by feudal tenure, a system prevalent in Scotland.<sup>3</sup> In order to achieve the maximum income from its land, the Council offered the feus of these building plots by public auction.<sup>4</sup> Any plots failing to attract bids of a minimum feu duty of £8 an acre—the ‘upset price’—were withdrawn until some future auction. Over a number of years, the Council made more land available in this area of Peebles, and new villas began to appear in Springhill and Frankscroft (Chapter 8, Fig.8-1). Towards the end of 1854, just over four acres of land at Dukehaugh—next to Frankscroft—came up for sale by a private owner, and they were bought by the Council for £385.<sup>5</sup> Another bidder had been the Caledonian Railway (CR), acting on behalf of the Symington, Biggar & Broughton Railway (SB&BR) of which it was the sponsor. This was an astute purchase by the Council, as it anticipated the opening of the railway line from Broughton to Peebles a few years later.

At the monthly meeting on 14 November 1860, the Council considered a notice of compulsory purchase by the Caledonian of approximately nine acres of ground at Frankscroft, Dukehaugh and Tweedbridgend Green.<sup>6</sup> This was to be the site of a railway station, goods depot, sidings and an engine shed (Figs.7-3 and 8-1). Here, the Council believed, was a great opportunity to

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<sup>3</sup> The landowner (the Feudal Superior) grants to the tenant (the Vassal) a perpetual lease of a plot of ground (the Feu), in return for a fixed annual payment, known as Feu Duty. The Superior routinely places restrictions on the type and cost of the property to be built, and imposes limitations (‘burdens’) upon its use. Thus, the new villas south of the Tweed had to cost at least £300, and the Town Council had to approve the plans before building began. For the effects of the Feuing system in Victorian Scotland, see *The Transformation of Edinburgh* by Richard Rodger (Cambridge, 2001) Chapter 3.

<sup>4</sup> Town Council Minutes (TCM), 4 /9/1854.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, 12/3/1855.

<sup>6</sup> Tweedbridgend Green lay between Tweed Bridge and Dukehaugh (Fig.8-1).

obtain a substantial contribution to Burgh funds. A land valuation formula for railways had been prevalent for many years in Britain, where the value was derived by calculating the annual rent (actual or notional) of the property, multiplied by 30 to 35 years. In addition, there was a premium for the compulsory sale, for damages and for severance, commonly amounting to 50 per cent.<sup>7</sup> As arbitration became more frequent, landowners had a great incentive to inflate the original asking price, since the arbitration award was often computed by adding half the landowner's asking price to half the railway's offer price.<sup>8</sup>

The Council therefore submitted an exaggerated claim of £5,548 for the ground, approximately £623 an acre. In addition it wanted a further £2,290 for a number of items, including construction of a footpath along the riverside (seen in Fig.7-3) and an access into Ninianshaugh.<sup>9</sup> Had the usual land-valuation formula been employed, the asking price would have been about £420 an acre (i.e. £8 annual feu duty times 35 years, plus 50%). As part of the claim, the Council demanded an exorbitant £2,451 for the ground at Dukehaugh, which had cost them only £385 a few years earlier. Matters remained thus for twelve months, until the Council heard that "the Caledonian Railway Company had taken possession of part of the Green above Tweedbridge without any previous intimation or form of law."<sup>10</sup> The Council then informed the CR Board that they would have to pay the full amount of the claim, with 5 per cent interest from the date of taking possession. The Caledonian reacted quickly by calling for arbitration.

In Scotland, the legal enactment that determined the relationship between a railway company (which had the right of compulsory purchase), and a landowner (who had the right to adequate compensation), was the Land Clauses Consolidation (Scotland) Act of 1845. In cases of disagreement over the value of the land to be appropriated, an important section of the Act

<sup>7</sup> PRC Minute Book, (PRM), 20/7/1852. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/1). The PRC Board offered a price equal to 35 years' annual rental for the land they needed.

<sup>8</sup> R.W. Kostal, *Law and English Railway Capitalism, 1825-1875*. (Oxford, 1997) p.170.

<sup>9</sup> TCM, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) 14/11/1860. Ninianshaugh lay due east of Tweedbridgend.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, 6/12/1861.



allowed either party to ask for arbitration. This applied where the sums at issue amounted to more than £50.<sup>11</sup> Under the arbitration section, the CR applied to the Sheriff of Peeblesshire for the appointment of an arbitrator, anticipating that its final offer of £1,850 for the nine acres would be refused. As expected, it was duly rejected by the Council on 1 January 1862. Their bluff having been called, the Councillors reduced their claim by £1,263, and agreed to accept the adjudication of an experienced arbitrator, Mr Hall Maxwell, who had been nominated by the Caledonian.<sup>12</sup> John Bathgate, the Town Clerk, was asked to instruct an architect and other expert witnesses to give evidence for the Burgh, in order to justify their revised figure of £4,285.

The arbitration hearing was held in Peebles between 28 February and 3 March 1862, with Bathgate appearing as Solicitor for the Burgh. It was reported at great length over nine issues of the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*. Despite having upwards of 20 witnesses, including the County Assessor for Midlothian, the outcome was something of a disaster for the Council. During the hearing, two major flaws in the Burgh case were revealed. A Caledonian witness pointed out that the previous year, John Bathgate had himself bought six and a half acres of land near Tweedbridgend for £90 15s. an acre. Another witness, a farmer, said that most of Dukehaugh was liable to flooding every winter, and that a proper drainage system would have to be installed before railway building operations could commence on the site. The final sum, awarded by Hall Maxwell at the end of May, was only £1,801 5s. or approximately £200 an acre.<sup>13</sup> This was under half the amount the Council might have received if the Arbitrator had employed the formula in common use. As the arbitration award was less than the original offer by the CR, the Burgh had to pay its own expenses, which amounted to £103.6s.<sup>14</sup> The Council wrote a letter of protest to Hall Maxwell, but failed to obtain any redress.

<sup>11</sup> Kostal, *op.cit.*, (ref.8) p.164. The Scottish and English Acts were similar.

<sup>12</sup> TCM, *op.cit.*, (ref.4), 9/12/1861.

<sup>13</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (*P.Adv.*,) 1/3/1862. Subsequent issues covered the detailed evidence on both sides.

<sup>14</sup> These arbitration costs appeared as an exceptional expense in the Burgh accounts for 1862.



The CR then proceeded to build the station and goods depot known as Peebles West, and the line from Broughton was finally opened on 1 Feb 1864. This is one of the few cases on record where the Land Clauses Consolidation Act had worked in favour of a railway company, as the legal right to arbitration was generally seen as greatly increasing the cost of land.<sup>15</sup> The Town Council's disappointment was heightened by the knowledge that a few years earlier, the NBR had paid £440 an acre in Hawick, for town land similar to that required by the CR in Peebles. In Galashiels, eleven acres belonging to Captain W. Clark had cost the NBR £550 an acre.<sup>16</sup> However, these high land costs were incurred during the Railway Mania of 1845-6.

Part of the NBR mileage in Peeblesshire was a section of the line between Galashiels and Peebles. While the PRC was still preparing its Parliamentary Bill in 1852, landowners and woollen manufacturers from Innerleithen and Traquair were promoting a railway from Innerleithen to Peebles. The PRC and the Town Council were in favour of this project, as it would act as a useful feeder to the Peebles Railway, and generate customs revenue for the Burgh.

Most of the land this railway would require in Peebles was privately owned, but the Councillors registered their 'Dissent' when they saw the plans of the approach into Peebles, which passed through the end of the Northgate, one of the three principal streets.<sup>17</sup> A later scheme in 1858 was even worse (Fig.7-1), as the centre line cut right through the middle of the Northgate. When the NBR finally took over from the local interests and won Parliamentary approval for the Galashiels & Peebles Railway in 1861, a satisfactory compromise was reached. The revised route ran between the *Centre Line* and the upper *Limit of Deviation* of the previous proposal. Passing underneath a new bridge carrying the Edinburgh road, the line linked up with

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<sup>15</sup> Kostal, *op. cit.*, (ref.8) p.165.

<sup>16</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.13) 14/6/1862.

<sup>17</sup> TCM, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) 15/10/1852 "Not from any hostile feeling towards the undertaking itself, but solely on the ground that it appears to them that the proposed diversion of the Turnpike Road at the end of the Northgate is an exceedingly bad plan for the Burgh."

the PR north of the original station.<sup>18</sup> This station was now rather small to cope with the anticipated increase in traffic, and through-trains would have to be reversed before they could continue. The NBR therefore built a new station, east of the Northgate, on land that had been a market garden. Known as Peebles East, it was opened when the Peebles-Innerleithen section of the railway began operations on 1 October 1864. The old station became a goods depot.

The Council had been more circumspect in their dealings with the NBR, hoping to avoid any repetition of the Caledonian fiasco. The Provost assured the Councillors that “the prices put on each of the portions of land to be taken, could be looked at as nothing but fair value. The Committee had arrived at the items only after mature consideration.”<sup>19</sup> The NBR agreed that the prices were fair, and so there was no legal wrangling over the cost of the land required by the Galashiels & Peebles Railway, finally opened in its entirety in October 1866.

The last ground to be occupied in Peebles was that required for linking the Caledonian station with Peebles East, via a bridge over the Tweed (Chapter 8, Fig.8-1). At an earlier Council Meeting in May 1863, a letter from Bathgate (in his role as PRC Secretary) had been discussed. This contained part of a Minute from the PRC Board. “The Board recommend to the Town Council of Peebles to take steps without delay that they may get the different Railway Companies entering in Peebles to agree to a joint station at the East end of the town by which the convenience of the public would be greatly promoted.”<sup>20</sup>

Unfortunately, this eminently sensible suggestion came too late, and, in any case, the bitter rivalry between the Caledonian and the NBR made such co-operation unlikely.<sup>21</sup> By this time the CR had already levelled and drained Dukehaugh, preparatory to building the Peebles West

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<sup>18</sup> By the date of this 1861 compromise plan, the Peebles Railway had been leased by the NBR.

<sup>19</sup> TCM, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) 8/1/1864.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, 11/5/1863.

<sup>21</sup> This rivalry was carried to absurd lengths, as shown in Chapter 8.

station and goods depot, using rubble excavated from the nearby Neidpath Tunnel.<sup>22</sup> The Council did not intervene, deciding to let the matter “lie on the table until next meeting”: it was never picked up again. The various Council Minute Books reveal that such shirking of major issues was not uncommon in the 1850s and 1860s. The end result was that although a loop line was built across the River Tweed, it was only ever used for goods traffic. Passengers transferring between the Caledonian and North British stations were faced with either taking a cab, or walking just over half a mile. This unsatisfactory situation was never rectified.

The Council demanded a total of £853 13s. 6d. for the ground required to construct the link between the two stations, which included parts of Ninianshaugh, the Gytes and Walkershaugh (Fig.8-1). The NBR made a counter offer of £601 16s. 9d.<sup>23</sup> After the Company refused to increase this offer, the Town Councillors decided to go to arbitration, nominating Robert Tod as their Arbitrator. The NBR named John Dickson to arbitrate on its behalf. The arbitration procedure was different from that used in the Caledonian case, as both parties were prepared to leave the settlement in the hands of the arbiters, rather than by means of a formal—and relatively expensive—legal process involving numerous witnesses. After Tod and Dickson had inspected the lands, they ruled that the amount to be paid by the NBR was £758 5s. 4d. As this sum was over £150 more than the original NBR offer, the Council’s stand had been vindicated. The total was to bear interest at 5 per cent per annum from the date in January 1864 when the company had taken possession. The details of the award are as follows:-

For Value of land taken at 45 years’ purchase:-

Ninianshaugh	1.483 acres @ 100s.	£333 13s. 6d.
Walkershaugh	0.156 acres @ 140s.	49 2s. 6d.
Gytes	0.169 acres @ 120s.	45 15s. 0d.
Curling Pond		<u>60 0 0d.</u>
		£488 11s. 0d.

<sup>22</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.13), 25/4/1863.

<sup>23</sup> *TCM*, *op.cit.*, (ref.4), 22/7/1864.

To Severance Damage at 30 years' purchase:-

Ninianshaugh	3.75 acres @ 40s.	£225 0 0d.
Walkershaugh	0.405 acres @ 30s.	18 4s. 4d.
Gytes	0.884 acres @ 20s.	<u>26 10s. 0d.</u>
		£269 14s. 4d
GRAND TOTAL		£758 5s. 4d.

The basis of the award was different from precedents quoted earlier. The ground taken was to be paid for at the unusually high rate of 45 years' purchase. There was also a large allowance for severance damage, particularly at Ninianshaugh, where the railway embankment cut off almost four acres between it and the River Tweed. A Council Minute records that "the Railway Company do not propose to enter into any argument as to the amount proposed to be awarded, but claim that the value of Ninianshaugh is over-estimated."<sup>24</sup>

Meanwhile, another disagreement arose between the Council and the NBR, which was to finish up in the Court of Session in Edinburgh. The NBR began work on the link between the stations towards the end of May 1865 by demolishing the south end of Tweed Bridge, without prior approval from the Council.<sup>25</sup> Petition was made to the Peebles Sheriff Court for an Interim Interdict, to suspend operations until the plans had been adjusted to the satisfaction of the Council. Their complaint was that the new approach road to the bridge was too narrow and the gradient too steep, and that they had rejected the NBR plans almost a year earlier.<sup>26</sup> Although both Sheriff Napier and Sheriff-Substitute Burnett declared an interest as NBR shareholders, the Councillors were prepared to let the case go forward in the Peebles Sheriff Court. However, the law agents for the NBR did not agree, presumably suspecting the Sheriffs of local sympathies. The Burgh therefore made immediate application to the Court of Session, where Lord Armidale,

<sup>24</sup> TCM, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) 14/8/1865.

<sup>25</sup> *ibid.*, 1/6/1865.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*, 24/6/1864.

the Lord Ordinary on the Bills, granted Interim Interdict.<sup>27</sup> It was to be a further eighteen months before the conflict was finally settled. The case was supposed to come before the Lord Ordinary in May 1866, but the Edinburgh lawyers acting for the Council advised that the Peebles Burgh records were in an unsatisfactory state. The NBR case was based on the claim that Tweed Bridge, and the access road to it, were under the control of the County Road Trustees and not the Town Council.

There was thus a further delay while the Council set about proving that they were “in possession of the Dry Arches and the Bridge itself—including the access thereto—prior to the interference of the Railway Company.”<sup>28</sup> They succeeded in finding documentary proof of ownership, with the result that the NBR finally agreed “to settle the case on the terms last adjusted and proposed by the Council,” and to pay the legal expenses incurred by the Burgh.<sup>29</sup> And so, both settlements with the NBR had a satisfactory ending for the Council, with no repetition of the Caledonian debacle. This was the last of the land negotiations between the various railway companies and the Peebles Town Council.

Returning to the Peebles Railway, we shall now look at the other PRC land purchases from private landowners, for these account for all except about £47 of the £17,012 total land costs. They work out at £895 per mile, considerably more than the original estimate, but much less than the going rate in the 1850s.<sup>30</sup> My evidence on land costs has come from a number of sources; mainly the documents required by Parliament in connection with the Peebles Railway Bill, the Act itself,<sup>31</sup> the Register of Sasines for Peeblesshire and the relevant PRC Minute Book. These

<sup>27</sup> TCM, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) 12/6/1865. The Bill Chamber was in the hands of the junior judge in the Court of Session. Originally a Vacation Court, Parliament conferred other duties upon it during the nineteenth century, including the granting of Interdicts and the hearing of appeals in railway and canal cases.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, 21/5/1866.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*, 21/1/1867.

<sup>30</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.13) 1/9/1853. Thomas Bouch stated, “They had succeeded in getting land for about one fourth of the price at which land for railway purposes was usually purchased.”

<sup>31</sup> An important clause in the Act was that all these land purchases had to be agreed within two years.

documents show that there was a wide range in cost between the cheapest and the dearest land. The lowest prices were paid to Sir Graham Montgomery and Lord Elibank who offered their land on favourable terms, and almost certainly to another PRC Director, Forbes Mackenzie of Portmore.<sup>32</sup> The dearest land was that of an objector to the railway, which was the subject of the arbitration procedure built into the Land Clauses Consolidation (Scotland) Act.

The Register of Sasines shows the amount of land (54.15 acres) conveyed to the PRC between Peebles and the county boundary near Leadburn, a distance of ten miles, but it does not give details of the prices paid. Where the PRC Minute Book occasionally notes that a sum of money has been paid to a particular landowner in settlement of a land claim, the location of that parcel of land, but not its size, can be found in the Book of Reference (Chapter 4). Only once did I find a payment recorded in the Minute Book that also included the amount of land involved.<sup>33</sup>

However, in my copy of the List of Owners in the PRC Parliamentary Bill submission, it is possible to make out faint numerals after some of the names: for example, the figure 3.164 appears beside the name of Sir Graham Montgomery. According to the Register of Sasines, Montgomery had conveyed 3.164 acres of land to the PRC at Cowieslinn. Additional figures also appear after the names of Lord Elibank and Sir Adam Hay, and tally with the lands conveyed by them. I have therefore taken similar added figures to be a correct indication of the acres sold by other named individuals, and was thus able to match the following pieces of land with the appropriate owners. The agreed payments are recorded in the PRC Minute Book. They are probably sufficient in number to give an indication of the range of prices paid by the PRC in the section between Leadburn and Eskbank in Midlothian, as well as the actual prices

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<sup>32</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.7), 7/8/1852). (NAS/BR/PBR/1/1). "It was remitted to Lord Elibank and the Chairman to arrange with Mr Mackenzie as to getting him to agree to the same terms as themselves." Although there is no record in the PRM, it is likely that the 23 acres belonging to Mackenzie at Portmore were sold at about £65 an acre. His was by far the largest piece of land required by the PRC.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, 3/10/1854. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2). Mrs Lilius Durham of Polton received £780.6s. 8d for 3.703 acres, but this included a severance payment.

paid for all but 2½ acres in Peeblesshire.<sup>34</sup> I did not attempt to search the Register of Sasines for Edinburghshire (Midlothian), as it would have been too time-consuming to unearth the PRC transactions.<sup>35</sup> Because of its size and population, Midlothian obviously had many more recorded conveyances than Peeblesshire.

#### Peeblesshire

Sir Adam Hay	6.021 acres in the Parish of Peebles	£963 7s 2d	(£160 per acre)
Lieut. Morrison R.N.	2.433 acres at Winkston, Peebles	£440	(£181 per acre)
James Wolfe Murray	3.855 acres at Cringletie, Eddleston	£724 12s 11d	(£190 per acre)
Lord Elibank	12.666 acres at Black Barony, Eddleston	£1069 10s 1d	(£84 per acre)
Forbes Mackenzie	23.062 acres at Portmore, Eddleston	£1500 (estimate)	(£65 per acre)
Sir Graham Montgomery	3.164 acres at Cowieslinn, Eddleston	£182 15s 3d	(£58 per acre)

#### Midlothian

James Pow	2.4 acres at Walltower, Penicuik	£372 14s 7d.	(£220 per acre)
Mrs Margaret Aitken	1.89 acres at Moss Houses, Penicuik	£466 13s 3d	(£245 per acre)
Mrs Lilius Durham	3.703 acres at Polton Estate, Cockpen	£780 6s 8d	(£210 per acre) <sup>36</sup>
R.B.W. Ramsay	12.244 acres at Whitehill, Lasswade	£1500	(£122 per acre) <sup>37</sup>
Alexander Hay	about 13 acres at Eskbank, Dalkeith	£2000	(£150 per acre)

Further comment is necessary on four of these transactions, namely those of Sir Adam Hay, Mrs Durham, Mrs Aitken and Alexander Hay.

We saw earlier that the PRC needed some of Sir Adam Hay's land. One of the original Directors of the PRC, Hay had resigned shortly after the Peebles Railway Act was passed,

<sup>34</sup> Two parcels of land totalling 2.656 acres in the Parish of Peebles appear in the Register of Sasines, but there is no record of payment for them in the PRM.

<sup>35</sup> At that time, Midlothian was usually referred to as Edinburghshire on maps of Scotland or in Census returns. 'Edinburghshire' was finally abandoned in 1889, when the county councils were established.

<sup>36</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.7), 3/10/1854. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2). This sum included compensation of £336 for severance damage at Hopfield Farm.

<sup>37</sup> Ramsay was the owner of the Whitehill collieries at Rosewell. He was also a PRC Director, and his was probably the cheapest land in the Midlothian section of the PR.

because he was spending most of the year at his London residence. Through his Peebles lawyer, William Blackwood, he offered to sell a fraction over six acres near the Cross Kirk for £120 an acre. But this low price was on condition that he was allowed to build and own the depots for coal, lime and other produce, not only for himself but also on behalf of his heirs and assigns.<sup>38</sup> The PRC Board refused this offer, as it would have given the Hay family a monopoly, and would have hampered the Directors in any future negotiations with other railway companies.

Hay's next offer was to feu the land to the railway at £15 per acre per annum, which was also refused. Earlier in this chapter we saw that the Town Council were feuing better building land than this at only £8 an acre. A final offer to sell the land at £170 per acre without pre-conditions was sent to the PRC Secretary, John Bathgate, but he pointed out to Blackwood that Alexander Hay, who owned similar land near Eskbank station in Midlothian, had accepted £150 an acre as a fair price.<sup>39</sup> Blackwood then wrote that in order to avoid the legal expenses of arbitration, he was authorised to sell at £160 an acre, and the PRC board accepted this offer.<sup>40</sup> As we saw, the PRC also paid at the same rate per acre for an adjacent strip of land from the Town Council.

Mrs Durham was prepared to sell her 3.703 acres at £120 an acre, but there was an unavoidable severance problem at Hopefield Farm. Severance was something that Bouch had done his best to avoid, but in this case it must have been more costly to go round the fields that were affected. Her arbiter and the PRC arbiter, John Dickson of Saughton Mains, agreed that £336 should be paid for severance damage, making a total cost of £210 an acre.<sup>41</sup>

Mrs Margaret Aitken lived at Moss Houses, and was one of the few objectors to the PR. However, she did not pursue her objection in Parliament. Her name and the amount of her land

<sup>38</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.7), 14/12/1853 (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2). The legal firm of Blackwood & Smith is still in business, but the letter book containing the Blackwood-Bathgate correspondence no longer exists.

<sup>39</sup> Alexander Hay was probably not related to Sir Adam, who rejoined the PRC Board in 1857.

<sup>40</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.7), 14/1/1854. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2).

<sup>41</sup> *ibid.*, 3/10/1854.



to be taken by compulsory purchase are recorded on the List of Dissenters, but she seems to have sold her property once the arbiters had agreed a price, possibly to avoid the unwanted railway on her doorstep. The payment of £466 13s 3d for the Moss Houses land was actually made to a Mr and Mrs Greenhill, and at £245 an acre it was probably the maximum amount paid by the PRC.

Bathgate's letter to Blackwood tells us that the price of Alexander Hay's land at Eskbank was £150 an acre, but the precise amount taken by the railway is not given. It must have been about 13 acres, as the PRC Minute Book records a payment of £2,000 for the land, "on his granting an obligation to complete the Title so soon as the exact quantity of land is ascertained."<sup>42</sup>

Bouch required a fraction over 54 acres of land to build the 10-mile Peeblesshire section of the PR between Leadburn and Peebles, and that included two stations, Eddleston and the terminus in Peebles. Leadburn to Eskbank was approximately 9 miles in length, and there were five country stations—but no terminus—to take into account. It is probably fair to assume that the Midlothian section also required about 54 acres, which were generally more expensive than those in Peeblesshire. The total cost of £17,012 divided by 108 acres gives an average price for the whole line of £158 per acre, with extremes of £54 and £245.

Bouch was very economical in his use of land—108 acres divided by 19 miles gives a figure of just under 5¾ acres per mile. Kellett indicated that the land required for a country line was normally 10 acres a mile, with extra for stations and sidings.<sup>43</sup> Simmons agreed with this estimate when he suggested that 11 acres a mile was the probable figure for railways in "the 20 principal agricultural counties in England and Wales (excluding all those adjacent to London)."<sup>44</sup> However, as well as single-line branches, there must have been sections of double-track line running through most of these counties, and this has to be taken into account. Suppose that it

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<sup>42</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.7), 14/1/1854. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/2).

<sup>43</sup> Kellett, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.391.

<sup>44</sup> J. Simmons, *The Railway in Town and Country, 1830-1914*. (Newton Abbot, 1986) pp.301-2.

had been necessary to double the line over the whole length of the Peebles Railway. Increasing the width of the existing works by a generous five yards to make room for a second track would only have added a little under 2 acres per mile, still well under Simmons' estimate.<sup>45</sup>

In this chapter, we have seen that while there was a harmonious association between the Town Council and the PRC over the subject of town land, the same could not be said of the relations with the NBR and the CR, especially with the latter. As far as the PRC was concerned, the Council did not insist on using the compensation paragraphs of the Lands Clauses Act to obtain the maximum price for their strip of land. On the other hand, they attempted to exact the highest possible prices for the land required by the NBR and the CR, where slightly different arbitration procedures were used. They largely succeeded with the North British. But, the resentment over the disappointing Caledonian arbitration award seems to be reflected in the Council's continued backing of the NBR, in its bitter territorial disputes with the CR. This backing was not confined to Peebles itself, but was also pursued in Parliament.<sup>46</sup> In Chapter 8 we shall be looking more closely at the rivalry between the North British and the Caledonian.

There was a considerable variation in the prices that the Peebles Railway Company had to pay to private landowners, with the more expensive land being found in Midlothian. Even so, by the standards of other railways the PR land was cheap, and Thomas Bouch was very economical in its use. During the arbitration hearing between the Town Council and the Caledonian Railway, Bouch was at a loss to understand why the CR required 13 acres for their station in Peebles, as he had built the PR station and sidings on less than half that amount.<sup>47</sup>

<sup>45</sup>  $[(19 \text{ miles} \times 1760 \text{ yds}) \times 5 \text{ yds wide}] / 4840 \text{ sq yds} = 34.54 \text{ acres or } 1.82 \text{ acres/mile.}$

<sup>46</sup> The following is an example. (TCM, 19/5/1862) "Resolved, that the Council petition both Houses of Parliament in favour of the Amalgamation Bill betwixt the North British Railway Company and the Edinburgh, Perth & Dundee Railway Company, and authorise the Provost to sign the petition."

<sup>47</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.13), 21/6/1862.

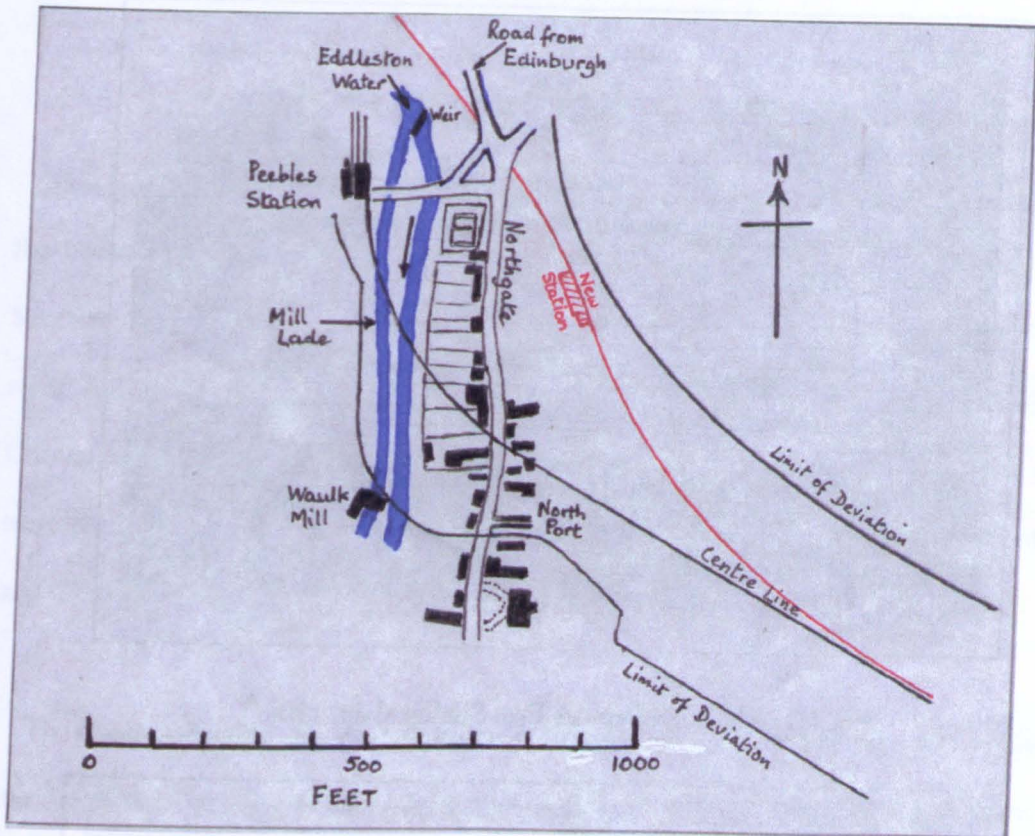


Fig.7-1. Route within Peebles of the proposed Innerleithen Railway in 1858.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> This sketch is based on a drawing of the proposed Inverleithen [sic] & Peebles Railway of 1858, which I found in the basement of what was originally Ballantyne's March Street mill. How it got there is a mystery, as the factory did not open until 27 years later. The line was ultimately built by the NBR as part of the Galashiels & Peebles Railway.



Fig.7-2. The NBR Peebles East Station about 1900.<sup>49</sup>

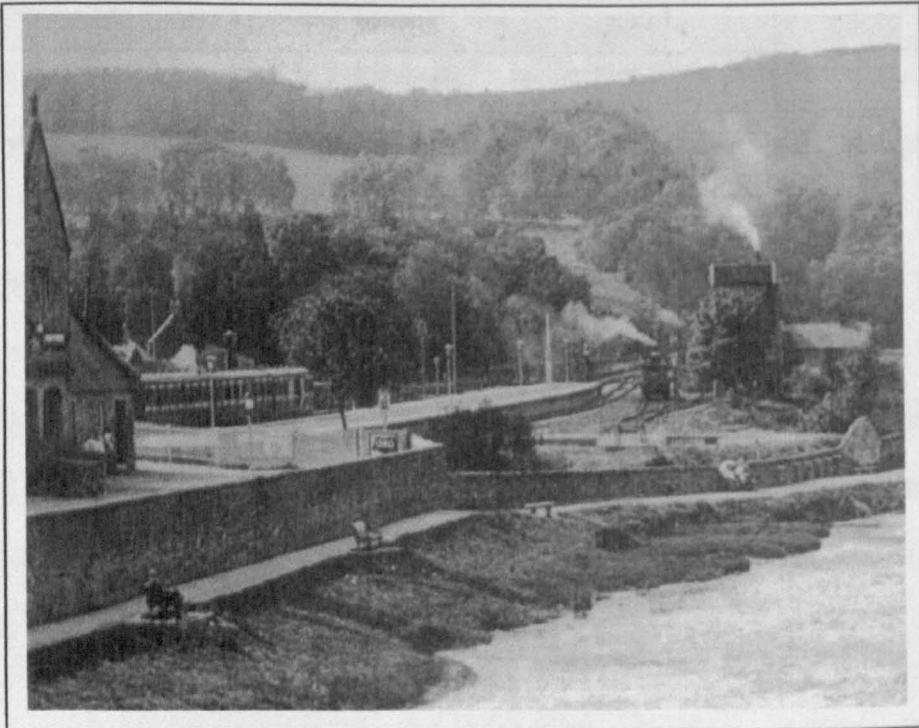


Fig.7-3. The Caledonian Peebles West station about 1880.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>49</sup> Photograph from *Old Peebles* by Rhona Wilson (Ochiltree, Ayrshire, 1998).

<sup>50</sup> Photograph from a postcard c.1890, courtesy of Messrs Robb and Stevenson, Peebles.

## NORTH BRITISH AND CALEDONIAN RAILWAY RIVALRY IN PEEBLESSHIRE

**“It is in universal and ubiquitous competition that the keynote to the Scottish railway system is, I think, to be found.”<sup>1</sup>**

This statement is certainly true of the relations between the North British Railway (NBR) and the Caledonian Railway (CR), a rivalry that began in the early days of railway promotion in Scotland. It sprang from a general belief that there would only be enough traffic to sustain one route between London and Scotland, and, in 1839, the Government appointed a Royal Commission on Anglo-Scottish Services to decide on the best one. The two main contenders were the East and West Coast routes, to be espoused in Scotland by the promoters of the NBR and CR respectively.

The Commissioners—Sir Frederick Smith, Inspector-General of Railways, and Professor Peter Barlow of the Woolwich Military Academy—reported in 1841 in favour of the western route via Lancaster and Carlisle. From Carlisle, despite the difficult gradients up to Beattock Summit, the railway was to continue north to Glasgow by the shorter Annandale rather than the alternative and easier Nithsdale route, thereby allowing a straightforward connection to Edinburgh from Carstairs. The CR promoters were ultimately successful in their bid to construct this line, and the Caledonian Railway Act received the Royal Assent on 31 July 1845. But, the opposition of two railway companies that had a vested interest in trying to stop the CR and its Annandale project, had slowed the passage of the CR Bill through Parliament.

One of these was the Glasgow, Dumfries & Carlisle Railway (GD&CR), set up to use the Nithsdale route to Glasgow, and the other was the NBR, which was to form the Scottish section of an East Coast route from London to Edinburgh, via York, Newcastle and Berwick upon Tweed. The Chairmen of the two companies (Leadbetter for the GD&CR and Learmonth for

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<sup>1</sup> W.M. Acworth, *The Railways of Scotland* (London, 1890) p.3.

the NBR) therefore signed an agreement in March 1844 for mutual co-operation against the Caledonian.<sup>2</sup> The conflict thus began before the NBR and CR had even been granted their Acts of Parliament.

Despite the Smith-Barlow recommendation, the NBR received its Act on 4 July 1844, and quickly began to construct the Edinburgh-Berwick section of the East Coast route, which opened on 18 June 1846. The NBR Board also considered a letter from the GD&CR in October 1844, suggesting a joint trunk line between Edinburgh and Carlisle, "in the event of the Caledonian Railway being rejected in its efforts to obtain Parliamentary approval."<sup>3</sup> The GD&CR would undertake the Carlisle to Hawick section of this line. The NBR had already commissioned traffic studies between Edinburgh, Galashiels and Peebles, and now took this opportunity to promote the 45-mile, nominally independent, Edinburgh & Hawick Railway.

Although the Edinburgh-Hawick line went ahead and construction work began in the autumn of 1845, the joint venture with the GD&CR came to nought when the Caledonian Act was passed. The CR line was eventually completed to Glasgow and Edinburgh in February 1848, and, within a month, the CR had taken over the Royal Mail contract between Edinburgh and England from the NBR.<sup>4</sup> The East Coast route had then been in operation for the best part of two years, but until temporary railway bridges over the Rivers Tweed and Tyne were opened in the autumn of 1848, disruptive changes of train were necessary at Berwick and Newcastle.

The ambition of John Learmonth was for the NBR to be in sole possession of territory in a triangle bounded by Edinburgh, Berwick and Carlisle. This remained Company policy during the rest of its independent life, which also saw further expansion into other parts of Scotland,

<sup>2</sup> C.J.A. Robertson, *The Origins of the Scottish Railway System: 1722-1844* (Edinburgh, 1983) p.282.

<sup>3</sup> GD&CR letter quoted in A.J. Mullan's *Rails across the Border*. (Wellingborough, 1990) pp.62-3.

<sup>4</sup> J. Thomas, *A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain, Volume VI, SCOTLAND: The Lowlands and the Borders* (Newton Abbot, 1984) p.144.



notably by swallowing up smaller companies. The only railway with the ability to thwart the NBR was the CR, which had territorial ambitions of its own, and the two companies maintained a bitter rivalry as each sought to become the dominant railway force in southern and central Scotland. In parallel, the CR was also in conflict with the Glasgow & South Western Railway (G&SWR), which had absorbed the GD&CR.

This background is indispensable to an understanding of the railway history of mid-nineteenth century Peeblesshire, where the Royal Burgh of Peebles became a 'frontier town' between the NBR and CR spheres of influence. Early railway companies usually respected the territory of their rivals. However, the proposed Caledonian Extension Railway of 1845 was a threat to the NBR in south-east Scotland, as it was to run from Ayr to Berwick upon Tweed via Carstairs, Peebles, Galashiels and Kelso.<sup>5</sup> This was the project that sparked off the 1845 Edinburgh & Peebles Railway promotion that we saw earlier in Chapter 3 (pp.42-3).

Part of the NBR plans for the Edinburgh & Hawick Railway in 1845 had included a branch to Peebles from Galashiels, but this was withdrawn while the NBR Bill was still going through Parliament. The isolation of Peebles from the expanding rail network in southern Scotland was thus set to continue. However, a significant conference was held on 2 February 1846 between NBR and CR representatives, where an agreement was reached. "Peebles would now be considered as a 'frontier' between the two systems in the Borders, the NBR surrendering any idea of advancing westwards from here towards Biggar, whence the Caledonian could build to Peebles."<sup>6</sup> In return, the CR would give up all opposition to future branches of the NBR east of Peebles. But, as we shall see, both companies were to break this agreement. The conference came to halt when the NBR raised the topic of an extension of the Edinburgh & Hawick Railway as far as Carlisle, with the Caledonian delegates refusing even to discuss the question.

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<sup>5</sup> Robertson, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) pp.299-301.

<sup>6</sup> Mullan, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.65.

In Chapter 3, we saw that Peeblesshire was one of the three Scottish counties south of the River Tay still without a railway in 1852. By then the progenitors of the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) had grown tired of waiting for the NBR or the CR to end the isolation of their town. They decided that their natural ally was the NBR, which, when approached, agreed that their proposed railway could form a junction with the Edinburgh & Hawick Railway near Eskbank. The NBR would then work the complete route between Peebles and Edinburgh. Despite the fact that the PRC Directors ultimately decided to operate the line themselves—they thought that the NBR terms were excessive—relations with the NBR Board remained cordial.

The Peebles Railway (PR) began operations in 1855, and it soon became apparent that here was the unusual case “where the branch is paying better than the trunk with which it unites.”<sup>7</sup> In 1858, local landowners led by the Earl of Traquair and the Innerleithen woollen manufacturers led by Henry Ballantyne, made an attempt to promote a railway some six miles long from Innerleithen to Peebles, where it would join and be worked by the flourishing PRC. Had this line gone forward, it would only have been a matter of time before the gap between Innerleithen and Galashiels was filled by the NBR. However, despite the 1846 territorial agreement, the CR still had plans to include Peebles and Galashiels in its network, and this Innerleithen-Peebles proposal therefore became the signal for renewed conflict between the CR and the NBR.

On 21 May 1858 a small, semi-independent company, the Symington, Biggar & Broughton Railway (SB&BR), received its Act of Parliament. Sponsored by the CR, the SB&BR proposed to build a branch from Symington on the CR main line to Broughton in Tweeddale, with the Caledonian working the line. The following year, when the branch was almost ready to open, the CR suggested that the SB&BR should seek an extension from Broughton to Peebles. The Caledonian Board secretly agreed to put up the necessary money for this potential threat to the

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<sup>7</sup> *Herapath's Railway Journal*, (Herapath) 25/4/1857, p.439.



NBR, for their ultimate aim was to continue eastwards in an attempt to revive the 1845 Caledonian Extension project. "It was essential that the [SB&BR] extension be seen as a public-spirited local venture unsullied by Caledonian influence."<sup>8</sup> In November 1859, a Bill was therefore put forward to extend the Symington branch from Broughton as far as Peebles, and this was subsequently agreed by Parliament. That same month, Richard Hodgson, who had become Chairman of the NBR, promoted two Bills: the first was for a Galashiels, Innerleithen & Peebles Railway (GI&PR), and, if that failed, the second was for the shorter Innerleithen & Peebles Railway. Either would block any attempt by the CR to extend the SB&BR beyond Peebles.<sup>9</sup>

The CR actively encouraged petitions against these North British Bills from as far away as Wishaw, Douglas, Lanark, Carlisle and Biggar, as well as in Peebles, Innerleithen and Eddleston.<sup>10</sup> The SB&BR had now opened the line to Broughton, and the CR Directors promised to extend it to Galashiels if the NBR Bills were defeated. To the delight of the Caledonian supporters, the House of Commons threw out both Bills by one vote during the 1860 Session of Parliament.<sup>11</sup> The Committee Chairman had used his casting vote against because he had not been convinced of the necessity for a railway between Galashiels and Peebles.<sup>12</sup> There had also been CR-inspired objections from Henry Ballantyne of Holylee and Colonel Horsburgh of Pirn House, on the grounds of potential damage to their properties; damage that would be avoided if the proposed CR route were to be used. Both estates were situated near Walkerburn in Peeblesshire. A public meeting was held in Galashiels on 10 August 1860 to win support for a CR Galashiels-Peebles line that would, "under one management, extend to Symington and the west of Scotland."<sup>13</sup> A Provisional Committee was immediately formed, in order to drum up the local support that would be vital before applying for the necessary Act of Parliament.

<sup>8</sup> J. Thomas, *Forgotten Railways: SCOTLAND* (Newton Abbot, 2nd edition., 1981) pp.39-40.

<sup>9</sup> J.L. Brown and I.C. Lawson, (eds.) *History of Peebles: 1850-1990* (Edinburgh, 1990) p.328.

<sup>10</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (*P.Adv.*) 5/5/1860.

<sup>11</sup> Brown and Lawson, *op.cit.*, (ref.9) p.328.

<sup>12</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10) 21/7/1860.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid* 18/8/1860.

However, after this CR project failed to make any significant progress, an important agreement was signed in November 1860 between the NBR, CR and the SB&BR, with the assent of the original promoters of the Innerleithen & Peebles Railway.<sup>14</sup> The main provisions of this agreement were as follows. Firstly, the NBR would not oppose the forthcoming amalgamation of the CR and the SB&BR. Secondly, the Caledonian would not oppose a new NBR attempt to connect Galashiels with Innerleithen and Peebles, provided that the NBR built a link across the River Tweed between the proposed Caledonian station in Peebles and the new railway (Fig.8-1). The link would have junctions to allow direct connections to a new North British station and also eastwards towards Galashiels. Thirdly, both CR and NBR locomotives would have running rights over the link. Finally, the CR could, if it so desired, establish mineral depots at Innerleithen and Galashiels, with the NBR conveying Caledonian mineral traffic at agreed rates.

It therefore began to look as though there might be a lasting truce between the rivals, at least in Tweeddale, if not elsewhere in Scotland. However, the peace lasted for only four months. According to the *Advertiser*, the CR went back on the agreement by lodging a 'Dissent' against the new Galashiels, Innerleithen & Peebles Railway Bill. "One thing is clear, the Caledonian must be wanting a quarrel for some other purpose."<sup>15</sup> At this juncture, there were a number of other sources of friction between the rivals, especially in central Scotland and in the Carlisle area. In anticipation of a possible about turn by the CR, a North British Board meeting had already decided "to lodge a Petition against the Caledonian and Symington, Biggar & Broughton Amalgamation Bill, should either of those Companies oppose the Galashiels, Innerleithen & Peebles Bill."<sup>16</sup> In addition, pressure would be put on the PRC to oppose the amalgamation. However, the situation was resolved on 28 June 1861 when the Galashiels and Peebles Railway (G&PR) Act received the Royal Assent. After this the Caledonian finally gave up all attempts to penetrate the Border country beyond Peebles.

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<sup>14</sup> NBR Board Minutes, (NBRM) 9/11/1860. (NAS/BR/NBR/1/9).

<sup>15</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10) 9/3/1861.

<sup>16</sup> NBRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.14) 19/2/1861.

A year later, it was the turn of the NBR to infiltrate into the territory of its rival. It backed a locally-promoted line to run westwards from the PRC station at Leadburn to the small village of Dolphinton, only 10 miles from the important CR Carstairs Junction. The Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway (LL&DR) <sup>17</sup> was opened in July 1864, and worked by the NBR for 12 months until the amalgamation (Chapter 15). At the outset, the CR had tried to browbeat the LL&DR promoters into changing their allegiance. When that failed, and the NBR and its old ally the G&SWR threatened to build the Douglas & Dolphinton Railway,<sup>18</sup> the Caledonian Directors decided to close the gap between Carstairs and Dolphinton themselves by a branch that was eventually opened in 1867. And that is how Dolphinton came to have two stations, less than a third of a mile apart. In a repetition of the Peebles situation, the CR would not accede to a joint passenger station in Dolphinton, even though the CR and NBR lines were linked together.

We now turn to the agreement where the NBR was to construct a link across the Tweed from the Caledonian station to the Peebles-Galashiels line. On the north side of the river a triangle would be formed, with one loop curving north to the NBR Peebles station. Another loop (shown dotted in Fig.8-1) ran eastwards. After the statutory inspection of the remaining section of the G&PR between Innerleithen and Galashiels, Captain Rich, RE, inspected the CR-NBR link on 24 May 1866. He did not like the way the north loop crossed the NBR sidings, and he also commented that the east loop “was laid down—part of it still remains, but the points have been taken out. I recommend that it be replaced and the present junction [i.e. the north loop] be taken out.” <sup>19</sup> This was obviously not a mandatory recommendation, because, as the photograph taken almost a century later shows (Fig.8-2), it was never carried out. It would seem that the NBR had no intention of allowing Caledonian through-trains direct access to the Galashiels line via the east loop, and had only included it in order to comply with the Act. There is no evidence that it

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<sup>17</sup> The LL&DR was built by Thomas Bouch, and initially it also had the redoubtable John Bathgate as its Secretary (Chapter 4).

<sup>18</sup> *P.Adv.*, (ref.10) 26/11/64. This edition carried a Statutory Notice of the intention to apply to Parliament for a line to be constructed and managed jointly by the NBR and G&SWR.

<sup>19</sup> Brown and Lawson, *op.cit.*, (ref.9) p.333.

was ever completed, or, indeed, that the CR had made any complaint about this contravention of the Act. A small piece of the east loop embankment can still be traced at Walkershaugh.

An aspect of the rivalry in Peeblesshire that does not seem to have been covered in the literature is in the contrasting quality found between CR and NBR railway buildings and bridges. “The Caledonian never seemed to miss a single opportunity for adding touches of beauty, dignity and elegance to its business of railroading.”<sup>20</sup> We shall see in Chapter 12 that their stations cost considerably more than those of the NBR—despite the growing CR financial problems in the 1860s—and this is reflected in their superior appearance (Figs.8-3 and 8-4).<sup>21</sup> To emphasise this superiority still further, Figs.8-5 and 8-6 show the contrast between two bridges over the River Tweed. The Neidpath viaduct of the CR, with its curved and skewed stone arches, decorated piers and parapet rails, is a very fine example of bridge construction. On the other hand, the NBR river crossings in Peeblesshire were utilitarian, wrought iron, bowstring girder bridges: possibly witnesses to the precarious state of the North British finances at this period. Fig.8-6 shows the bridge carrying the link line over the River Tweed, in the final days of railway operations in Peebles. It is typical of the NBR bridges in Peeblesshire.

The Directors of both companies had to face Committees of Inquiry in the mid-1860s formed by disgruntled shareholders, which revealed that dividends had been paid out in previous years that were not covered by earnings. In the NBR case, the inquiry report revealed that “a careful and most ingenious fabrication of imaginary accounts” had been used to disguise the true position of the Company.<sup>22</sup> Both the current Chairmen, Hodgson of the NBR and Salkeld of the CR, were replaced. Ironically, Hodgson’s replacement as Chairman was a Caledonian Director, John Stirling of Kippendavie, with the result that after more than 20 years of strife, the two impoverished companies opened negotiations in 1868 that almost led to their amalgamation.

<sup>20</sup> O.S. Nock, and D. Cross, *Main Lines across the Border*. (London, revised edn., 1982) p.41. Michael Robbins talks of “the more elegant Caledonian” in his *The Railway Age* (London, 1862) p.69.

<sup>21</sup> The Lyne and Cardrona stations served similar agricultural hamlets.

“A committee, composed of an equal number of the directors of each board is to be appointed, with full control over the traffic, the rates and the routes.”<sup>23</sup> Both Boards unanimously agreed to an amalgamation of the two Companies in November 1871.<sup>24</sup>

However, the NBR pulled out after the Wharnccliffe meeting on 1 December, when the NBR shareholders—led by an accountant, J.M. Douglas—had refused to ratify the agreement. To the dismay of the Caledonian Directors, who “do not acquiesce in the course taken by the North British Company,” the NBR had terminated “their Amalgamation Agreement, and their Working Arrangement with this Company.”<sup>25</sup> By this date, however, both companies had already taken the first steps upon the road towards financial recovery.

In this chapter we have looked at the suicidal rivalry between the NBR and CR during the 1850s and 1860s and how it affected Peeblesshire. While the North British G&PR kept the Caledonian out of Galashiels, and the CR managed to reach Peebles from the west, it is likely that neither branch line ever paid its way. William Chambers, the PRC Chairman, announced half-year dividends of 6¾ per cent in October 1868, and commented that “the Peebles Railway is solvent in the midst of universal disaster. We now have before us the melancholy spectacle of two gigantic companies in a condition of little better than bankruptcy.”<sup>26</sup> To a large extent this was the result of millions of pounds having been squandered in fruitless territorial battles, not only in the Borders and elsewhere in Scotland, but, above all, in Parliament. Despite this, Peeblesshire finally achieved a railway system that was to serve it well, until displaced by the internal combustion engine a century later. Much of the benefit was to be found in the stimulation of tourism, which we will cover in the following chapter.

<sup>22</sup> J. Thomas, *The North British Railway* (Newton Abbot, 1969) Vol.1, p.135.

<sup>23</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10), 25/1/1858.

<sup>24</sup> *NBRM*, *op.cit.*, (ref.14), 1/12/1871. (NAS/BR/NBR/1/18). The agreement between the Caledonian and the North British Railway Companies to amalgamate was sealed on 29/11/1871.

<sup>25</sup> CR Directors Report to Shareholders Meeting, 30/3/1872.

<sup>26</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10), 3/10/1868. Dividend comparisons between the PRC, CR and NBR from 1856 to 1876 are shown in Fig.8-7. 1864-74 was a dismal period for NBR shareholders.

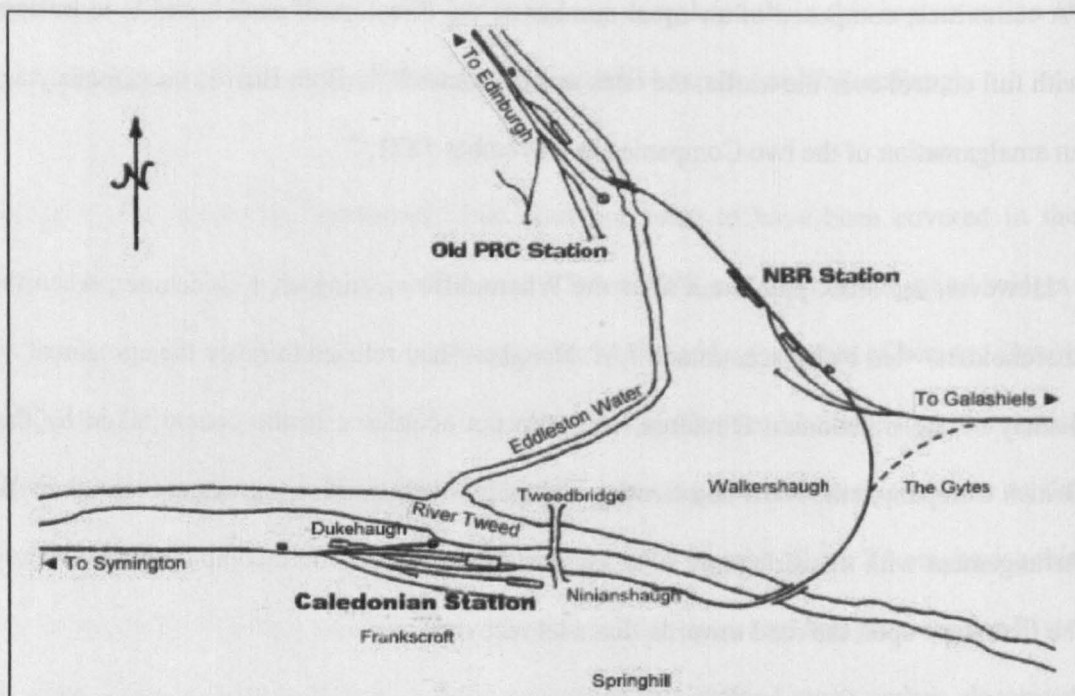


Fig.8-1. Sketch map of the railway interconnections in Peebles.<sup>27</sup>

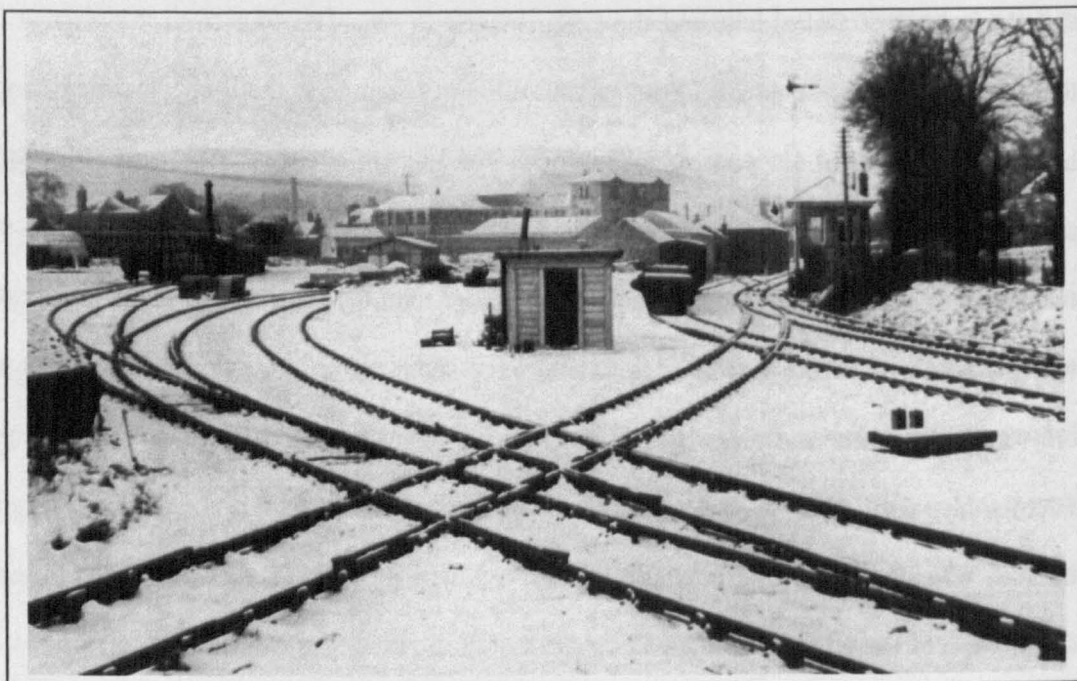


Fig.8-2. The north loop approaching Peebles East across the NBR sidings.<sup>28</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Amended version of sketch from Brown and Lawson, *op. cit.*, (ref.9) p.329.

<sup>28</sup> Photograph courtesy of Holland & Sherry Ltd. Their warehouse can be seen in the background.

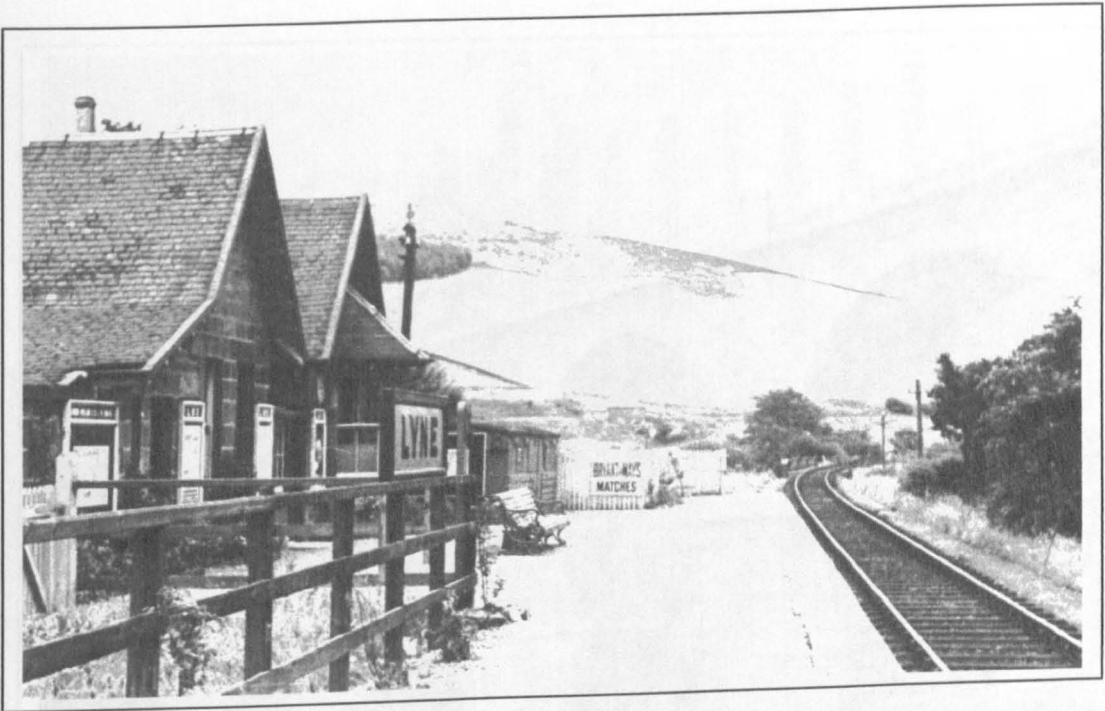


Fig.8-3. The Caledonian Lyne station was stone-built and cost £1,800.



Fig.8-4. The wooden North British station at Cardrona cost £500.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Photographs on this page courtesy of Mr Ronald Glendinning.





Fig.8-5. The imposing Caledonian Neidpath viaduct, *circa* 1880.<sup>30</sup>



Fig.8-6. The NBR Tweed bridge in Peebles in 1961, shortly before the closure.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>30</sup> Photograph from *Old Peebles* by Rhona Wilson (Ochiltree, Ayrshire, 1998).

<sup>31</sup> Photograph courtesy of Mr Ronald Glendinning.



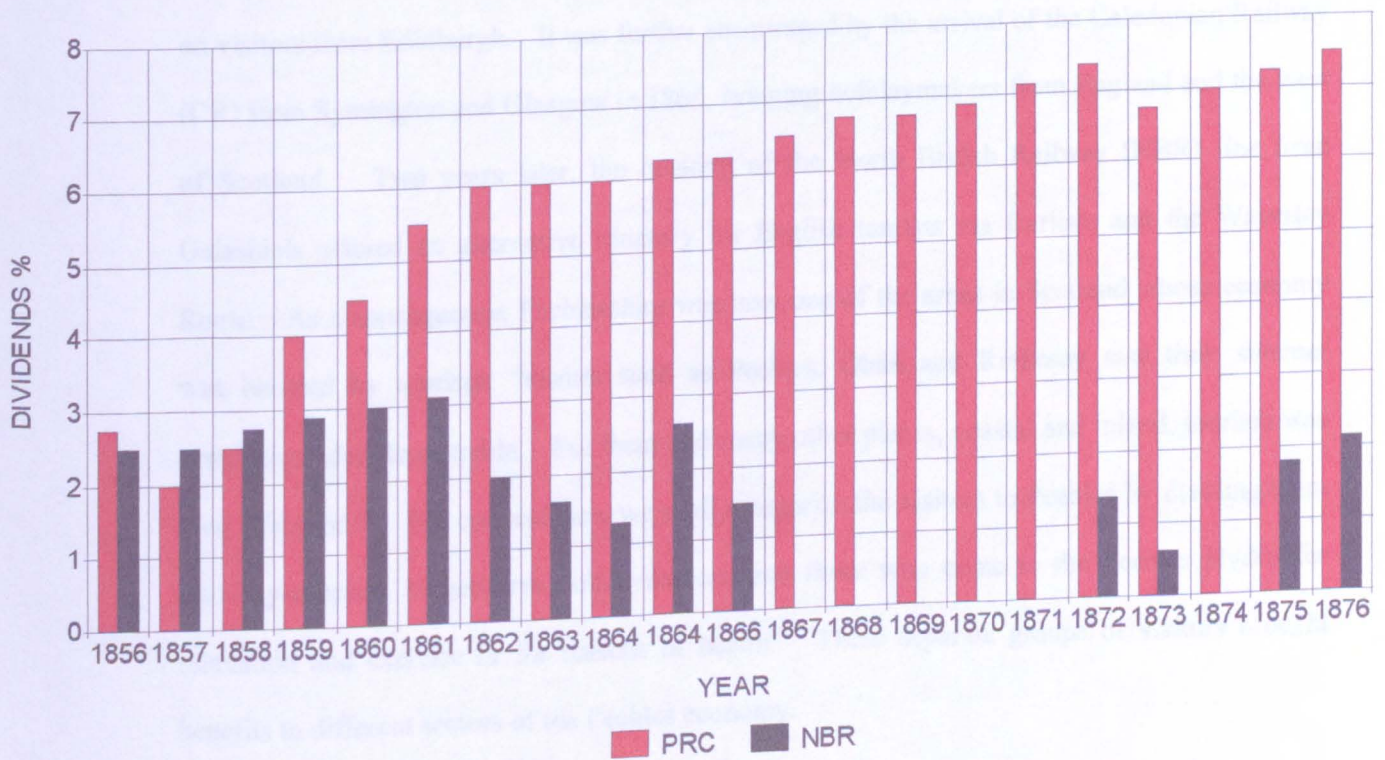
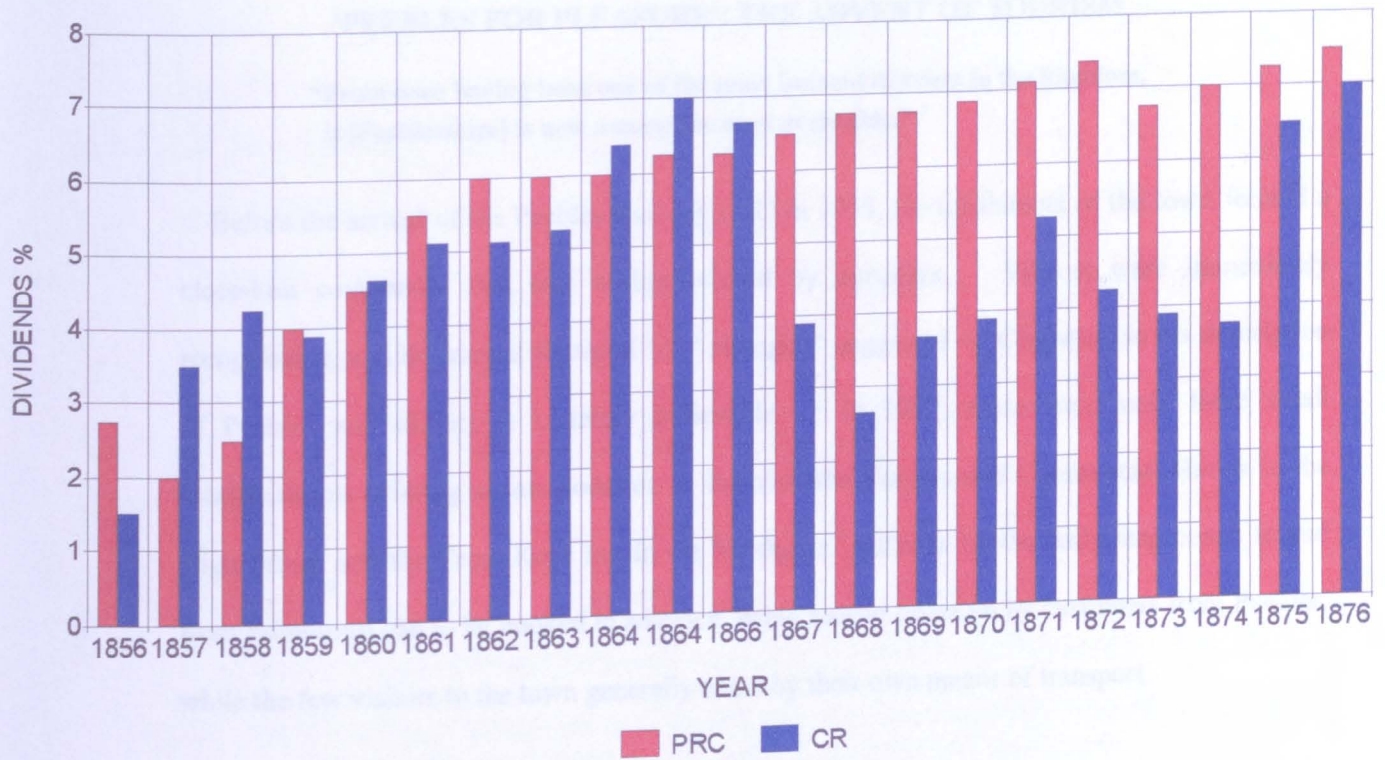


Fig.8-7. Peebles Railway dividend comparisons with the CR and NBR: 1856-76.



### **'PEEBLES FOR PLEASURE': THE ADVENT OF TOURISM**

**"From once having been one of the most isolated districts in the kingdom, it [Peeblesshire] is now among the most accessible."**<sup>1</sup>

Before the arrival of the Peebles Railway (PR) in 1855, the inhabitants of the town formed a close-knit community that was seldom visited by outsiders. Visitors were immediately recognisable, and the annual figure of '250 strangers' suggested by Chambers in his description of Peebles and district is certainly believable. In 1837, there were only three small establishments offering accommodation in Peebles: the Tontine and Commercial Hotels in the High Street, and the Cross Keys Inn in the Northgate.<sup>2</sup> Places on the daily stagecoach to and from Edinburgh had to be booked in advance, being mostly taken up by customers from Peebles, while the few visitors to the town generally came by their own means of transport.

The advent of the PR saw the beginnings of a tourist industry in Peebles, initially concentrated on visitors from Edinburgh. It was further encouraged by the arrival of the Caledonian Railway (CR) from Symington and Glasgow in 1864, bringing holidaymakers from England and the west of Scotland. Two years later, the opening of the North British Railway (NBR) line from Galashiels offered an alternative itinerary for English tourists via Carlisle and the Waverley Route. As a consequence, Peeblesshire was now one of the areas in Scotland whose economy was boosted by tourism: "resorts such as Peebles, Oban and Rothesay saw their summer populations double or treble. For them and many other places, coastal and inland, tourism was their lifeblood."<sup>3</sup> For convenience, we shall categorize the visitors to Peebles by dividing them into day-trippers, longer-term holidaymakers, and those who came to the Peebles Hydro for relaxation and exercise or for reasons of health. These separate groups of visitors brought benefits to different sectors of the Peebles economy.

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<sup>1</sup> W. Chambers, *Peebles and Its Neighbourhood with a Run on Peebles Railway* (Edinburgh, 2nd edn., 1863) p.14.

<sup>2</sup> Pigot & Co's *National and Commercial Directory* (1837) pp.660-1.

<sup>3</sup> A.J. Durie 'Tourism and the Railways in Scotland' in A.K.B. Evans and J.V. Gough, (eds.) *The Impact of the Railway on Society in Britain: essays in honour of Jack Simmons* (Aldershot, 2003) p.200.

## Day Trippers

DATE	EXCURSION	VISITORS
29/6/1861	Annual excursion of North British Railway employees from Edinburgh. The largest train to date on the PRC line.	about 1000
29/6/1861	Boys and teachers from Daniel Stewart's School, Edinburgh.	90
6/7/1861	Large excursion party from the Port of Leith in two trains.	at least 1200
13/7/1861	Boys and teachers from Wellington Reformatory, Leadburn.	48
20/7/1861	Employees from the Hawthorn & Co. factory in Leith	400
10/8/1861	Employees of Brydon & Co., Bellhangers, Edinburgh	N/A
10/8/1861	Boys and girls from Donaldson's Hospital, Edinburgh.	100
28/5/1864	Miners and their families from Wardlaw Ramsay's Whitehill Colliery.	N/A
6/8/1864	Party of Roman Catholics from Edinburgh in 46 carriages. This visit to the Cross Kirk was the largest recorded railway excursion to Peebles.	1760
15/7/1865	Annual excursion of North British Rubber Co., Edinburgh. This came by the longer CR route through Symington and Broughton.	400
22/7/1865	Employees of Cowan's Paper mill, Penicuik.	120
5/8/1865	Employees of W.& R. Chambers, Edinburgh, to the Glenormiston Estate of William Chambers.	over 300
19/8/1865	Annual excursion of Edinburgh Free Gardeners.	N/A
26/8/1865	Excursion by the townsfolk of Musselburgh.	over 450

Table 9-1. Some Day Trips reported by the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*.<sup>4</sup>

Less than four weeks after the opening of the PR on 4 July 1855, the first excursion train arrived from Edinburgh with over 500 passengers.<sup>5</sup> Since the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) only owned two locomotives, four passenger carriages and two brake vans at this date (Chapter 5, p.79), there must have been assistance from the NBR in making possible such a large number of excursionists. A few days later, Robert Stirling, Editor of the *Advertiser*, predicted that "Peeblesshire and its natural beauties will now be laid open and visited by thousands."<sup>6</sup> It was not long before his newspaper was publishing regular

<sup>4</sup> The dates given in the Table are those when the reports appeared in the newspaper.

<sup>5</sup> *Peebles Gutterbluid Club: Extract of Minutes 1823-1883* (Peebles, 1973) p.23. A Gutterbluid was someone born in the town, as opposed to a Stooriefit (dusty foot) who was an incomer.

<sup>6</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (P.Adv.) 1/8/1855.

accounts of excursions to Peebles during the summer season. Some were school trips, but more often they took the form of works outings, complete with families and brass bands. Table 9-1 lists a selection of excursions recorded by the *Advertiser* after the PR had been leased to the NBR, which had a much greater stock of locomotives and carriages. These large excursion parties must have made a considerable impact on the small town of Peebles—whose population was just over 2,000 at this time—and were doubtless very welcome to the owners of the shops and public houses. On the other hand, there was considerable opposition to Sunday visitors from the Peebles congregation of the Free Church of Scotland. A description of one of the large excursions will be found in Appendix 7.

### Holidaymakers

Once it had been opened up to outsiders, Peebles was able to attract middle-class families prepared to stay in its boarding houses and rented villas for at least a week, and often for the whole of the summer. Some of these families returned to Peebles year after year, for the names and places of origin of visitors were regularly listed in the *Advertiser*. Until the start of the First World War in 1914, "all resorts of any social pretension" had such lists published in their local newspapers.<sup>7</sup> Looking at the Peebles lists over a number of years, a regular pattern emerges: the summer season began in the first week of June and ended in the last week in September. Holidaymakers outside these dates were not recorded, unless they were staying at the Peebles Hydro, which had a longer season.

Commenting on the situation in the 1920s, the then manager of the Hydro—whose father had become manager in 1898—thought the fact that "the population rises in summer from 6,000 to 10,000 amply proves that its [Peebles] attractions are well known and appreciated."<sup>8</sup> Apart from the 1914-18 period of World War I, it is very likely that Peebles had seen a comparable summer influx since the 1860s. Such large numbers of visitors were obviously very important to the local economy. According to Slater's 1867 Directory (see Appendix 2), two more

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<sup>7</sup> A.C. Durie, *Scotland for the Holidays: Tourism in Scotland, c1780-1939* (East Linton, 2003) p.14.

<sup>8</sup> W.A. Thiem, *The Peebles Hotel Hydropathic Ltd* (Peebles, 1930) p.4.

hotels—the Crown and the Railway—had been added to the three that were there in 1837. By 1880, a further small hotel, the Caledonian, had been built at the west end of the High Street, about 250 yards from Peebles West station, and aimed primarily at CR passengers.

Let us now look at one or two of the visitor lists in the *Advertiser*, starting in 1880, the year before the Peebles Hydro opened. On 3 July there were 43 families on holiday in Peebles, mainly in rented villas, or in superior lodgings such as that of Mrs Notman, widow of the former Chief Constable of Peeblesshire. The majority of these visitors came from Edinburgh and Leith, with one or two from Glasgow and Greenock. Included in their number was Principal Caird of Glasgow University. Twelve of these families were still there on 21 August, including the Aitchisons, Alexanders, Coupers, Handasydes, Poulterers and Whites, who were in residence again in July of the following year. The Coupers were regulars until the summer of 1884, while the Whites were still on the lists in 1888. Unfortunately, the smaller hotels did not provide details of their guests, some of whom may well have stayed for shorter periods.

### **The Peebles Hydro**

From modest beginnings in the 1840s, the hydropathic system of health treatment became very popular in Britain, and the possibility of building a hydro in Peebles had been raised by the Editor of the *Advertiser* as early as 1856. "Is it not worthy of consideration how far such a speculation might be likely to succeed in Peebles?"<sup>9</sup> Shortly after this editorial, the PRC Directors were approached by a James Middlemas, seeking concessions in freight rates and passenger fares in the event of a hydro being successfully promoted in the town (see pp.185-6).

One possible location for the establishment of a hydro was at Innerleithen, where Sir Walter Scott's novel *St Ronan's Well*, published in 1824, had made known to a wide audience the medicinal properties of the water from this well. However, the Hydropathic eventually came to

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<sup>9</sup> *P.Adv., op.cit.*, (ref.6) 1/12/1856

Peebles because of the offer of “a splendid site on the southern slope of a hill where it could benefit from maximum sunlight,” and because “it was close to two railway stations.”<sup>10</sup> Duncan Smith, Managing Director of the Peebles Hotel Hydropathic—to give its full title—confirmed the importance of the railway connections. “The first consideration was the site. Peebles had in that respect great advantage, from its nearness to Edinburgh, to Glasgow, and even to London, for, since the opening of the Midland [Railway] route they had direct mail communications via Galashiels.”<sup>11</sup> The *Advertiser's* report on the ceremony of laying the Hydro's foundation stone on 24 August 1878 stated that Smith, an Edinburgh lawyer, was the original promoter of the scheme, having written the prospectus in 1870. No mention was made of Middlemas.

The foundation stone was laid by William Chambers, who paid tribute “to the handsome manner in which Sir Robert Hay granted liberal terms in feuing the ground to the Directors, and giving facilities for copious supplies of water.”<sup>12</sup> In the course of his speech, Chambers gave a short history of the growth of the hydropathic movement in Britain, revealing that there were already sixteen establishments in Scotland, of which the best known were Crieff, Dunblane, Pitlochry and Moffat.

After it opened on 15 July 1881, the Peebles Hydro (Fig.9-1), which had accommodation for 200 guests, quickly became a favourite with the affluent visitor to Peeblesshire. “It would indeed be difficult to find a more suitable and in every way beautiful spot than Peebles for an inland health resort.”<sup>13</sup> The Hydro had its own horse-drawn omnibuses, a familiar sight in the town, meeting trains at the railway stations. The first guest list did not appear in the *Advertiser* until 1884, when, on 5 July, there were 67 families or individuals in residence. There was a wide geographical spread of visitors, including families from as far afield as India, Mauritius, and the USA. The Hydro had a longer summer season than the villas and lodgings, as its lists

<sup>10</sup> H. Thom, *The Peebles Hydro: A Short History* (Peebles, 1996) p.1.

<sup>11</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.6) 31/8/1878

<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*

were usually printed from May to October. At other times, lists would appear when special events were organised at the Hydro, such as a series of 'Entertainments' over the 1883 Christmas and New Year period, or during an exceptionally busy Easter period in April 1884. The number of guests probably remained fairly constant over the years, although it is not possible to confirm this because of a disastrous fire in 1905 that destroyed the hotel records.

Evidence of a wealthy clientele was to be found in the number of governesses, nurses and servants accompanying the families. Guests from fashionable English seaside towns—Torquay, Bournemouth, Southport, Weston-super Mare and Scarborough—are an interesting feature in the 1884 list. These families were presumably escaping from the summer visitors to their own home resorts. Guests of the Peebles Hydro were probably equally divided between those seeking relaxation through walking, riding, fishing and golfing on the one hand, and those who had come for the 'cure' on the other. Indoor facilities included a billiard room, a swimming pool, and a ballroom, with dancing on weekday evenings to the music of a resident orchestra.

The establishment was possibly the best-equipped hydro in the country. "Guests were offered a wide range of water cures prescribed by the resident doctor, Professor Petsky. The Peebles Hydro boasted a fully-equipped electro-therapeutic department, which generated its own electricity," while the sun and air bath was probably the first in Britain.<sup>14</sup> Apart from those residents on special diets prescribed by Petsky, the other guests enjoyed meals of a high standard, prepared by a chef who had worked for a German Royal Duke. This detail came from a friend of Charles Dickens, who had enjoyed "duck and green peas, and also partridge and cabbage garnished with bacon. At that time the Hydro grew its own vegetables, fruit and herbs."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Thiem, *op. cit.*, (ref.8) p.1

<sup>14</sup> Thom, *op.cit.*, (ref.10) p.1.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, p.2.



The building was totally destroyed by fire on the night of Friday, 7 July 1905, although all the guests and staff were evacuated safely. But the economy of Peebles was seriously damaged: for example, the gas works had lost its best customer, while the Town Councillors were forced to increase the Burgh General Assessment from 10d to 1s.1d in the £, or approximately 30 per cent.<sup>16</sup> However, thanks to the efforts of Albert Max Thiem, a new hotel rose from the ashes of the original hydro, and was opened on Friday, 22 March 1907. It remains to this day a prominent feature of the tourist industry of Peeblesshire. Nevertheless, there would not have been a hydropathic establishment in Peebles—or indeed in Innerleithen—had it not been for the presence of the railway companies. And the railways carried the majority of the Hydro guests right up until the Second World War.

Apart from tourism, the other plank in the local economy facilitated by the arrival of the railways was the establishment of a factory-based woollen industry, which will be described in the following chapter.

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<sup>16</sup> The assessments were obtained from the Peebles Town Council Minute Books.

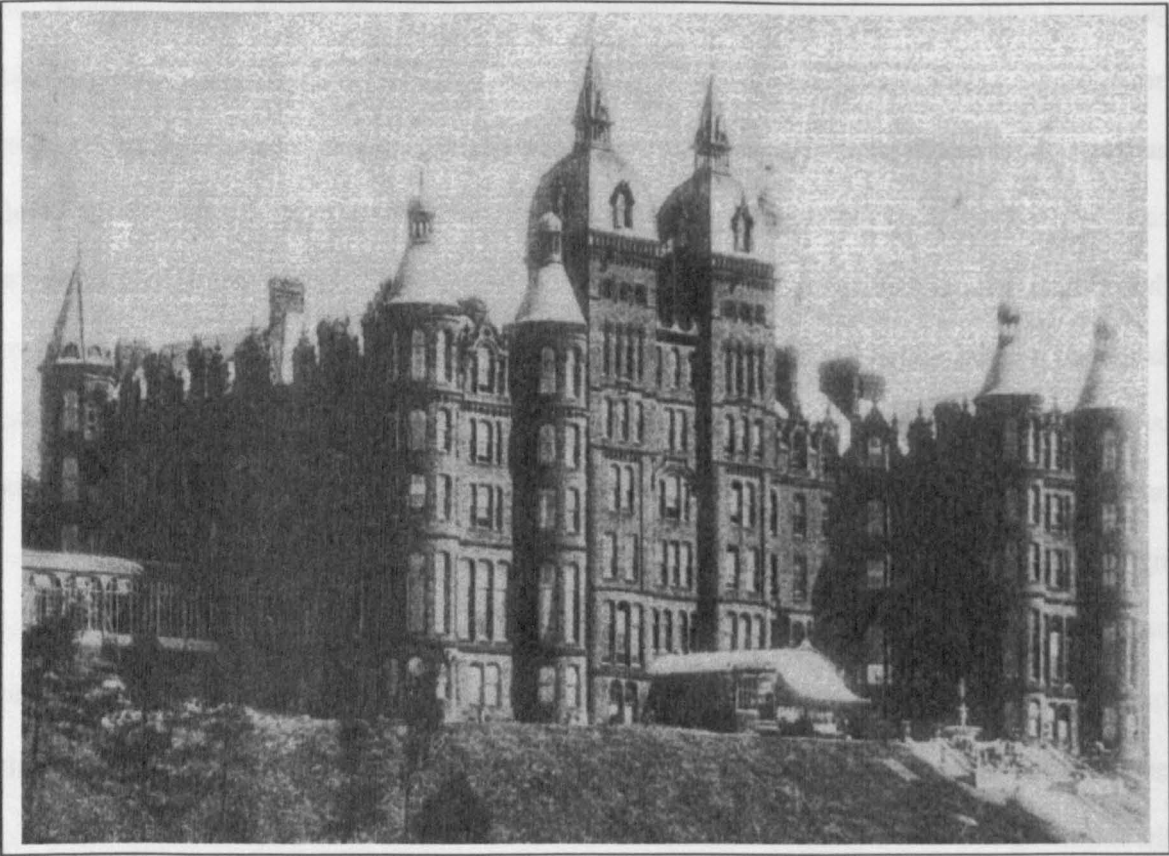


Fig.9-1. The original Peebles Hydro—opened in 1881 and destroyed by fire 1905.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>17</sup> Photograph courtesy of Messrs Robb and Stevenson, Peebles.

## ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MODERN WOOLLEN INDUSTRY IN PEEBLES

### Background

We saw in Chapter 2 that Peebles—like other towns in the Scottish Borders such as Hawick, Galashiels and Selkirk—had long been involved in spinning and handloom weaving as a cottage industry. There are records from the fifteenth century of a waulk mill on Tweed Green for fulling the finished webs after they left the loom. Originally, the fulling operation to shrink and thicken the cloth was done by stamping on the fabric in water, from which came the old Scottish term ‘waulking’. The Peebles waulk mill was later moved to a site in Damdale on the Eddleston Water, and its location can be seen on John Wood’s 1823 town map (Fig.2-1, p.35). “It was tenanted in 1829 by Mr Dickson, the founder of the well-known firm of Arthur Dickson & Co., Galashiels.”<sup>1</sup>

In the late 1820s, Sir Walter Scott had set a new fashion in London by wearing tweed trousers bought in Glasgow, made up in the black and white shepherd check pattern that he had adopted as the ‘tartan’ of the Scott clan. The first six pieces of this pattern to be sent to London for trouser making were woven in Peebles and finished by Dickson in the waulk mill.<sup>2</sup> They had been bought by an Edinburgh merchant, Alexander Craig, and sold to a Scottish-born tailor in Covent Garden, James Locke, the man who is usually given the credit for originating the name ‘tweed’. “The story goes that Watsons of Hawick invoiced some *tweel* (which was the standard name for Scottish cloth because of its twilled appearance) but the word was written carelessly and was read as ‘tweed’.”<sup>3</sup> The association with the well-known Borders river was a natural mistake by Locke’s accounts clerk. Locke immediately saw that ‘tweed’ offered a considerable commercial advantage as a trade name, and it was not long before it came into general use.

<sup>1</sup> Michael Thorburn (1851-1934), Managing Director of Walter Thorburn & Bros., tweed manufacturers in Peebles, writing in J.W. Buchan, (ed.) *History of Peeblesshire* (Glasgow, 1925) Vol. 1, p.217.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p.217.

<sup>3</sup> E.P. Harrison, *Scottish Estate Tweeds* (Elgin, 1995) p.49.

Craig and Locke vigorously promoted the shepherd pattern of tweed, so that “further orders followed and were supplied in Peebles and Bannockburn. By late 1830 Galashiels manufacturers, too, were engaging in the trade,” as the shepherd checks in a range of background colours rapidly became popular with the fashion-conscious upper classes.<sup>4</sup> It was from this small beginning that the Scottish fancy woollen trade grew, and Peebles had played a part in it.

The importance of Scott’s *Waverley* novels in furthering this commerce was borne out in a report by a Government Inspector in 1838. They had “conferred a very material benefit on the woollen trade of Scotland.”<sup>5</sup> In 1848, the Prince Consort bought the Balmoral Estate in Aberdeenshire, and “one of the first things he did was to design *The Balmoral Tweed* for use by all the stalkers and ghillies on the estate.”<sup>6</sup> This royal example led many other landowners to adopt a distinctive livery for their estate workers. The popularity of all things Scottish—arising from Scott’s novels and the royal love affair with the Highlands of Scotland—helped Borders tweed to become the aristocrat of the woollen textile industry in Britain.

Organisation of the industry in Peeblesshire on a factory basis began in Innerleithen rather than in Peebles, with the establishment of a mill by Alexander Brodie about 1790. Brodie was a native of Traquair, near Innerleithen, who had amassed a large fortune in London and had never forgotten his birthplace. “Under a strong impression that much good might be done by planting a factory at Innerleithen, to use up the wool of the district and give employment to the young of both sexes, he built a mill and equipped it with machinery, at a cost of £3,000.”<sup>7</sup> Water-powered machinery was employed in the preparation of the fleeces and the spinning of the yarn. However, the mill was not a commercial success until it was taken over by Robert Gill of

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<sup>4</sup> C. Gulvin, *The Tweedmakers: a history of the Scottish fancy woollen industry 1600-1914* (Newton Abbot, 1973) p.72.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, p.80.

<sup>6</sup> Harrison, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.21.

<sup>7</sup> W. Chambers, *A History of Peeblesshire* (Edinburgh, 1864) p.369.

Galashiels in 1839, who enlarged it and converted the spinning to steam power.<sup>8</sup> It now employed more than a hundred people. Other mills soon followed in Innerleithen, built by manufacturers from Galashiels and Selkirk where land and waterpower were becoming scarce.

A further impetus was given to the woollen industry of Peeblesshire in 1847, when Henry Ballantyne of Galashiels built a large weaving mill at Walkerburn, having already rented one of the Innerleithen mills. Nevertheless, Innerleithen and Walkerburn remained at a disadvantage compared to Galashiels, especially once the Edinburgh-Hawick Railway opened in 1849. Robert Gill wrote on 19 August 1863 to his friend and fellow woollen manufacturer, James Johnston of Elgin, bemoaning the lack of a railway to Innerleithen. "That 12 miles of road is as much a barrier to buyers who flock to Galashiels as if we were located beyond the Rocky Mountains."<sup>9</sup>

Meanwhile, Peebles was falling behind the other Border towns. By 1835, the counties of Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles had established 24 woollen mills, and this number had risen to 48 by 1856.<sup>10</sup> But, despite the efforts of the Town Council to attract "manufacturers, capitalists and others," not one of these mills was located in Peebles. Writing in 1834, the Parish Minister, the Rev. John Elliot, lamented that "much has been said against the want of enterprise and public spirit in the inhabitants not introducing manufactures."<sup>11</sup> The 1841 Census confirms that textile manufacturing was still essentially a cottage industry in Peebles, providing work for 79 men and four women. There were also two 'manufacturers' employing handloom weavers (Appendix 3). Cotton was still more important than wool, occupying over two-thirds of the Peebles weavers, but ten years later the position was reversed as the mechanisation of the cotton industry made

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<sup>8</sup> Thorburn, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) pp.218-9. Gill was a prominent member of the South of Scotland Chamber of Commerce, and did much to "promote technical education in the textile industries of Scotland." He was particularly interested in improving the design of fabrics, and his reports to the Chamber of Commerce were widely read and respected in the industry.

<sup>9</sup> Harrison, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.57.

<sup>10</sup> Gulvin, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) p.85.

<sup>11</sup> *New Statistical Account of Scotland: Vol.III The Eastern Borders* (Edinburgh, 1845) p.15.

hand looms uneconomic. According to Dawson, in 1853 the weavers and knitters in Peebles still had “manufactures of plaiding and coarse woollens, stockings and cambrics.”<sup>12</sup> However, by this time the total numbers had fallen to 44, including three manufacturers—of this total, 21 men and 5 women worked in wool (Appendix 3).

### The Peebles mills

Hand looms in the woollen industry remained in use for much longer than in cotton, since woollen power looms were very unreliable in the early years. They did not come into general use in the Counties of Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles until the early 1850s, when they rapidly took hold: by 1856, 328 power looms had been installed.<sup>13</sup> This was the year that saw a short-lived attempt by Thomas Dickson to establish a woollen mill in Peebles, on the site of a former corn mill on the banks of the River Tweed, next to the Parish Church. The following year this mill was refurbished and advertised for sale by the Town Council as suitable premises for woollen manufacturers or paper makers (Fig.10-1). It was eventually bought in 1859 by Laing & Irvine, a firm of Hawick woollen merchants. William Irvine told the Duke of Buccleuch—his Feu Superior in Hawick—that they had only set up in Peebles because all the land with available waterpower in Hawick was already occupied. But, he added the rider that “the warehouse must remain in Hawick as no buyers visit Peebles, where there is nothing to induce them but our own solitary factory.”<sup>14</sup> The annual Peebles output of Laing & Irvine had reached £20,000 by 1864, out of a Peeblesshire total of £220,000.<sup>15</sup>

And so, four years after the opening of the Peebles Railway, the Burgh had its first ‘modern’ woollen mill. As reported in the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, it started modestly with six power looms, employing 15 hands on the upper flat of the mill in the weaving and finishing of tweeds.

<sup>12</sup> J.H. Dawson, *An Abridged Statistical History of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1853) p.762.

<sup>13</sup> Gulvin, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) p.85.

<sup>14</sup> J.L. Brown and I.C. Lawson, (eds.) *History of Peebles: 1850-1990* (Peebles, 1990) pp.26-7.

<sup>15</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref.7) p.372.

Two more looms were to be added weekly until a total of 26 had been installed, and the workforce had risen to about 50.<sup>16</sup> The machinery was driven by a water wheel, 15 feet in diameter and 12 feet wide, generating one hundred horsepower. The first piece of tweed to be manufactured by the mill was finished on 7 March 1860, and bought by Walter Thorburn for sale in his shop in the High Street.<sup>17</sup> The ground floor flat of the Tweedside Mill was occupied by Robert Todd, who carried out the spinning operations that supplied yarn to the weavers above.<sup>18</sup>

In the absence of any remaining employee records, we must turn to the Census returns in order to find out more about the workers in the Tweedside Mill. In 1861 there were 40 Peebles men and 33 women working in wool, of whom less than half had been born in the town (Appendix 3). Not all of these 73 worked in the mill, for there were still a few self-employed handloom weavers, stocking knitters, domestic spinners and winders. One or two of the hand looms would also have been found in the mill, for use by the pattern weavers. These were skilled men who executed the various patterns of the tweed designers, which would form the basis for the selection of patterns for the forthcoming season.<sup>19</sup> There is a problem in compiling accurate statistics for the mill, since the Census Enumerators' Books do not reflect a standard set of job descriptions. For example, only one power loom weaver is recorded in the 1861 Census, but there must have been others to work the 26 looms in Tweedside Mill. It is likely that most of the mill's weavers would be found in the 'OTHER SCOTTISH LOCATIONS' column of Appendix 3. With previous experience in mills elsewhere, they were probably attracted to Peebles by higher wages.

The next stage in the progress of the woollen industry in Peebles was the establishment of Thorburn's wholesale tweed business. A biographical sketch of Walter Thorburn, banker and merchant, appeared in Chapter 6. At the age of 20, he had gone into the business of selling

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<sup>16</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser (P.Adv.)* 11/2/1860.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, 17/3/1860

<sup>18</sup> Todd was Provost of Peebles between 1870 and 1875. According to the 1871 Census he had been born in Perthshire, and lived in one of Thorburn's villas in Springhill.

<sup>19</sup> Gulvin, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) p.152.

woollens and other textiles in a small shop in Peebles High Street, and over the years the concern had grown to such an extent that the shop had been greatly expanded. Having found that the most profitable part of his textile business was in tweeds, Thorburn decided to branch out in 1861. Under the name of Thorburn & Co., a wholesale tweed venture began in new premises in the Innerleithen Road (Fig.10-2), which, according to the *Advertiser*, was then “the largest Tweed Warehouse in the South of Scotland.”<sup>20</sup> The business grew rapidly, and Thorburn took his second son, Walter, into partnership: his eldest son, Robert, was already established as a lawyer and banker in Peebles. The warehouse was so successful that Thorburn ultimately decided to quit the retail business, and, according to the inventory of his estate, he sold the High Street shop and its stock in trade to Melrose, Menzies & Co. in 1866, for just under £1,300.

After the death of Walter (Senior) in 1867, his third son, William, a textile merchant in Manchester, joined the concern, and, as we shall see, he was to run it successfully from 1869 onwards. This business, later trading under the name of Lowe, Donald & Co., built a world-wide reputation for selling fine cloths. Early in 1869, William’s two elder brothers, Walter and Michael, decided to go into partnership as ‘Walter Thorburn & Bros., Tweed Manufacturers.’ With money left to them in their father’s considerable estate, they began by building a new factory on the site of the old waulk mill in Damdale (Fig.10-3).

The brothers were fortunate in their timing, as the Damdale Mill had only just got into production when the Franco-Prussian War began in August 1870. They were able to win a considerable share of the US and Canadian markets, displacing French and German firms which had previously been strong in North America.<sup>21</sup> The South of Scotland Woollen Trade Report for 1871 shows that it was not only the Thorburn mill that benefited from the war. The boom was mainly due to the great increase in exports, for “never at any previous time in the history of

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<sup>20</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.16) 15/6/1861.

<sup>21</sup> Personal communication from Mr Hunter Thorburn (b.1916), who was the last Managing Director of the Thorburn factories.



the Scotch tweed trade has there been such a demand for goods as during the past year. Orders have been so numerous that many of them have had to be refused.”<sup>22</sup> Thus, by the middle of 1871, the Thorburn brothers were already trying to enlarge the Damdale Mill, and had laid plans for their proposed extension before the Town Council.<sup>23</sup> The 1871 Census reveals that there were now 162 people—including 105 women—engaged in the Peebles woollen industry, of whom the vast majority worked in the mills (Appendix 3). By this time, Adam Dobson had set up a factory in Damcroft (Fig.10-4)—next to the Thorburn mill—for the preparation and carding of fleeces prior to the spinning operations.<sup>24</sup>

By 1871, 12 years had elapsed since the first power-driven woollen mill had been opened in Peebles, and the number of woollen workers had more than doubled (Appendix 3). At this date over half the workforce had been born outside Peebles, for the most part having migrated from other areas in Scotland, and the Census Enumerators’ Books reveal that 14 of these workers and their families were housed in lodgings. The average age of the incoming males working in the Peebles mills was 30, with the oldest being 57 and the youngest 12: for females, the average age was 27, the oldest being 70 and the youngest 12. The young girl’s father and two sisters were also employed in the same mill: this employment pattern—where more than one generation of a family worked in the same mill—became quite commonplace.

The Laing & Irvine business in Hawick and Peebles was badly managed, and the firm became bankrupt in 1875.<sup>25</sup> The Tweedside Mill was then put up for auction, and was bought by Walter and Michael Thorburn to add to their Damdale operation (Fig.10-5). With the continued growth in sales, it soon became desirable to expand operations at the Tweedside Mill, and the plans to build an extension were passed by the Town Council in August 1880.<sup>26</sup>

<sup>22</sup> *P.Adv., op.cit.*, (ref.16) 6/1/1872.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, 17/6/1871.

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*, 10/9/1870.

<sup>25</sup> Thorburn, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.223.

<sup>26</sup> *P.Adv., op.cit.*, (ref.16) 14/8/1880.

The next important event in the history of woollen manufacturing in Peebles took place in 1885, when David Ballantyne opened his March Street Mill. We saw earlier that his father, Henry Ballantyne, had built a large mill in Walkerburn after having rented an existing factory in Innerleithen. Upon Henry's death in 1865, the Ballantyne operations in Innerleithen and Walkerburn continued to grow under the management of his five sons. David was the eldest, and 20 years later he set up a separate company in Peebles, D. Ballantyne & Sons, for the spinning of yarn (Fig.10-6). Weaving was added later.<sup>27</sup> This was the first factory in Peeblesshire to be lit by electricity, and it also had the advantage of having its own railway siding. According to a brochure issued to employees in 1951, it was the second-largest spinning mill in Scotland when it first opened. Now trading under the name of Robert Noble Ltd., the March Street factory manufactures woollens and cashmeres, and is the only mill left in Peebles.

#### **The new wholesale tweed warehouse**

William Thorburn took over the wholesale tweed merchant business of Thorburn & Co., after his elder brothers established their Damdale Mill in 1869. Under William's energetic management the firm continued to expand, and, after two changes of name, the company finally became known as Lowe, Donald & Co. There is no information as to why the Thorburn name was dropped, unless it was to avoid confusion with the business of Walter Thorburn & Bros. Lowe, now retired, had been a partner, while William Donald had joined the firm in 1878 as Sales Director. A great expansion took place in 1881, when the company entered the overseas market. In addition to a London showroom, Lowe, Donald established subsidiary warehouses in Paris, Budapest, Buenos Aires, Boston (USA), and Canada.<sup>28</sup>

Two years later a new and imposing building was opened in Dean Park, Peebles—which, according to an extant ledger had cost £4,715 to build—and, to minimise handling costs, the new

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<sup>27</sup> The weaving department was added after the Peebles, Walkerburn and Innerleithen businesses had amalgamated under the name D. Ballantyne Brothers & Co. Ltd in 1920.

<sup>28</sup> Thorburn, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.224.

warehouse was built as close as possible to the North British station and sidings. The illustration (Fig.10-7) appears in an old sales brochure, and shows a train leaving the station for Galashiels. In the background is the Damdale Mill.

Like the Peebles Hydro and the new villas in Springhill to be discussed in Chapter 11, the new warehouse was built of stone, probably from Musselburgh, near Edinburgh, rather than from the local whinstone—known locally as greywacke from its colour. Judged to be aesthetically inferior, “the hard and somewhat intractable whinstone dug from the hills in the upper region of the Tweed admits of little elegance in architecture.”<sup>29</sup> In any case, many of the whinstone quarries within a mile or so of Peebles were already worked out. There would probably have been little difference in transport costs, since the railway would have delivered the imported stone in bulk and on site at a reduced tariff, while the local whinstone would have had to be carried over turnpike roads by horse and cart.

By 1883, Lowe, Donald were not only dealing with Scottish cloths, but also with Yorkshire worsteds and west of England fabrics. “It seems incredible that one of the largest woollen distributing firms in Great Britain should be located in a small country town in Scotland and should exercise such an influence on the high-class woollen trade of the world.”<sup>30</sup> So wrote Michael Thorburn, forty years later. Although the merchant house of Holland & Sherry now owns the wholesale tweed business, the balance sheets of Lowe, Donald are still available. The assets and profits of the company between 1862 and 1891 are shown in the graphs (Fig.10-8), and reveal that the company made a profit in every year except the first.<sup>31</sup>

<sup>29</sup> Chambers, *op.cit.*, (ref.7) p.54.

<sup>30</sup> Thorburn, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.224.

<sup>31</sup> Lowe, Donald became a Limited Company in 1903. Minute 18 of the first meeting of the new Board on 6/11/1903 reveals that the partners obtained almost £250,000 for their flourishing business.

The cyclical variation in Lowe, Donald profits during this period tends to mirror the ups and downs experienced by the Borders woollen trade in general, most notably in 1881 which was in sharp contrast to the previous year. In its review of that year, the Editor of the *Advertiser* made the following comment about the Borders woollen industry. "The manufacturing interest has suffered considerably, although as far as Peebles is concerned, there has not been much room for complaint until recently."<sup>32</sup> The mills were then on short-time working, but it was thought that this would only be a temporary measure. From this and one or two other examples from the *Advertiser*, it appears that Peebles was not as severely affected in the downturns as the other Borders woollen towns, probably due to the fact that its mills were relatively new, and equipped with the latest machinery.

However, Peebles was never to become as important in the manufacture of Borders woollens as were Hawick, Selkirk and Galashiels, which had the advantage of an earlier start. County statistics for the woollen industry ceased in 1871, at which date 47 mills were recorded in the Counties of Roxburgh, Selkirk and Peebles.<sup>33</sup> As we have seen, at this date only three of these were located in Peebles, with only more, the Ballantyne mill, still to come. However, if we look at the textile industry of Scotland as a whole, between 1851 and 1911 there was a fall in the numbers employed of 51,392. But, in the same period the woollen towns of the Borders saw a rise of 2,786.<sup>34</sup> There is a telling statistic derived from the assessment of income *per capita* in selected counties in Scotland for the year 1880. The shires with the highest incomes were Roxburgh, Berwick, Peebles and Selkirk with over £20 a head, while Lanark and Renfrew were in the bottom nine at just under £10.<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.16) 31/12/1881.

<sup>33</sup> Gulvin, *op.cit.*, (ref.4) p.85.

<sup>34</sup> W.H. Fraser and R.J. Morris, (eds.) *People and Society in Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1990) p.205.

<sup>35</sup> P.P., Vol. LII, (149) 1882, pp.28-9.(Quoted by Fraser and Morris).

It is unfortunate that there are no nineteenth-century employee or production statistics available for any of the woollen factories in Peebles, which is probably why Gulvin makes no mention of them. Nevertheless, as can be seen from Figs.10-9 and 10-10, the mills provided employment for a growing number of workers—especially for women—many of whom were born in other parts of Scotland and had migrated to Peebles (Appendix 3). In turn, these migrants put great pressure on the available living accommodation, and the keeping of lodging houses was added to the occupations in Peebles by Slater's Commercial Directory for 1867 (Appendix 2).

Mainly due to the efforts of two families, the Thorburns and Ballantynes, the manufacturing of yarn and tweed and the merchandising of various types of woollen cloth became a vital factor in the economic prosperity of Peebles after 1859. "Their entrepreneurial enterprise had largely provided the economic strength to expand and develop the town, and the employment they provided raised the standard of living for its townspeople."<sup>36</sup> Both families were involved in almost every aspect of civic life in Peebles and in the county, with Thorburns and Ballantynes being numbered among the Provosts and Lords Lieutenant. They also gave generously of their time and money towards a variety of local initiatives and charitable causes.

We have already seen in other chapters that there were signs that Peebles was emerging from its moribund state by 1850. But, it was not until after the opening of the Peebles Railway, with the establishment of the woollen mills and the growth of tourism, that the Burgh saw the beginning of a significant economic and physical expansion. In Chapter 11 we will look at the way in which this physical expansion took place and the contribution made by the railway.

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<sup>36</sup> Brown and Lawson, *op.cit.*, (ref.14) p.163.



**TO WOOLLEN  
OR  
PAPER MANUFACTURERS.  
MILL LANDS  
AND  
WATER POWER  
AT PEEBLES  
FOR SALE.**

**TO BE SOLD BY PRIVATE BARGAIN,**

The very Valuable WATER-POWER on the River Tweed, at Peebles, within 300 yards of the terminus of the Edinburgh and Peebles Railway, calculated by an eminent engineer to be of 100 horse-power, with the CAULD, SLUICES, MILL-LADE, TAIL-RACE, DWELLING and other HOUSES, including the Newly-finished Large MILL of Three Storeys, besides Attics, containing 1540 square yards of Flooring, capable of holding Four Sets of Carding Engines, Four Billies, and 4000 Spindles, or suitable for an extensive PAPER MANUFACTORY, there being an abundant and steady supply of pure Water at all seasons. The Buildings, for which there is ample ground, may be extended to exhaust the water-power, which is only about half taken up at present. From its proximity to the town of Peebles, in which there is an abundant population, workpeople can be had at a nominal rate, and coals and other carriages are at a very moderate rate; in short, so desirable a Property is seldom in the market, and will be sold at a price to yield a good percentage.

Further particulars will be learned on application to JOHN BUCHAN, Writer, Peebles, in whose hands are the Title-Deeds, and who has power to conclude a sale.

PEEBLES, 24th OCTOBER 1857.

(William Clark, Printer, Peebles.)

Fig.10-1. Town Council advertisement to attract industry, 1857.<sup>37</sup>

<sup>37</sup> From S.A. Scott, *Gleanings from Grandfather's Attic* (Peebles, 1991). This is one of a collection of miscellaneous papers found in the attic of Sheila Scott's grandfather, John Buchan, Writer, Peebles, son of the John Buchan mentioned in the advertisement.





Fig.10-2. The original wholesale Tweed warehouse of Walter Thorburn & Co.<sup>38</sup>



Fig.10-3. The Damdale woollen mill of Walter Thorburn & Bros.<sup>39</sup>

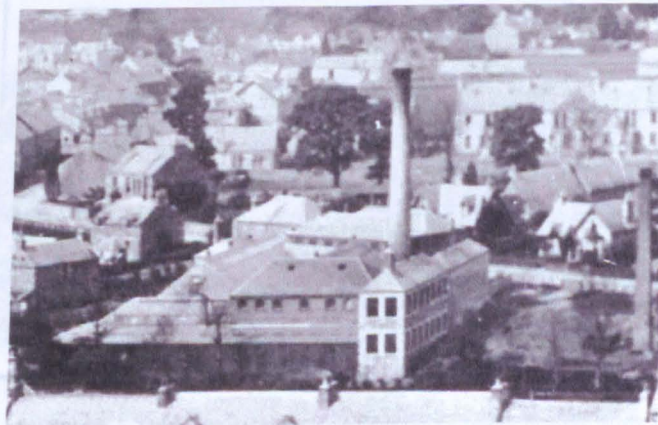


Fig.10-4. The Damcroft fleece preparation mill.<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup> Photo by the Author.

<sup>39</sup> Photo from R.B. Robb and E.R. Stevenson, *Glimpses of Old Peebles* (Peebles, 1987).

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*





Fig.10-5. The Tweedside Mill of Walter Thorburn & Bros.<sup>41</sup>

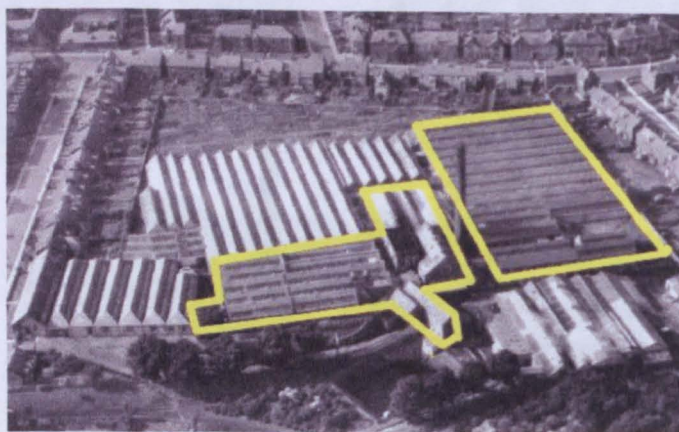


Fig.10.6. The March Street Mill of David Ballantyne.<sup>42</sup>

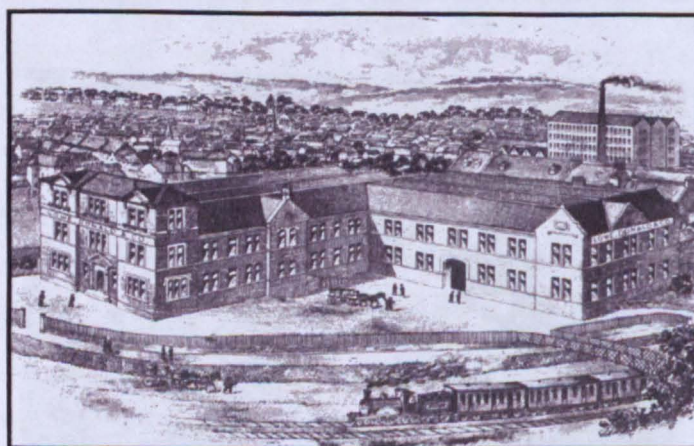


Fig.10-7. The Lowe, Donald 1883 warehouse and Peebles East station.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> Robb & Stevenson, *op.cit.*, (ref.39).

<sup>42</sup> The original yarn mill is outlined in colour. (Photograph from Ballantyne sales brochure, 1951.)

<sup>43</sup> The 1883 warehouse and a large extension added in 1901 still fulfil their original purpose. Photograph from old sales brochure, courtesy of Messrs Holland & Sherry.



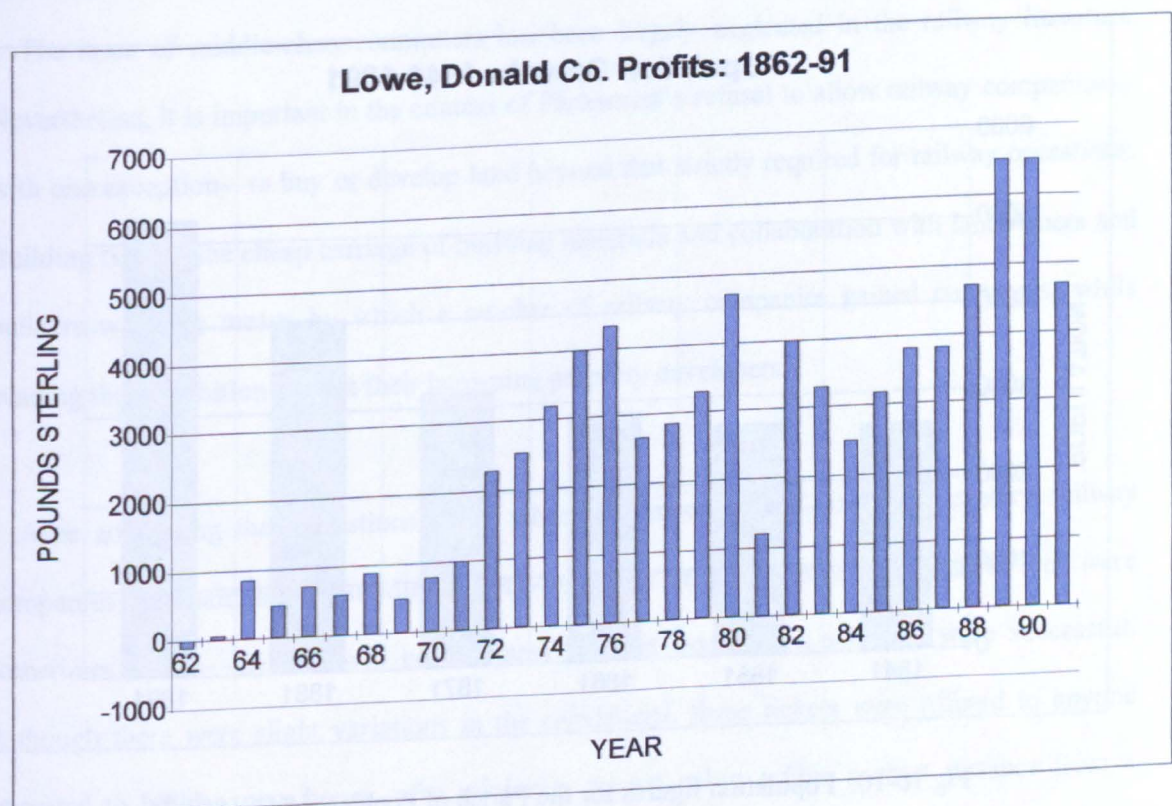
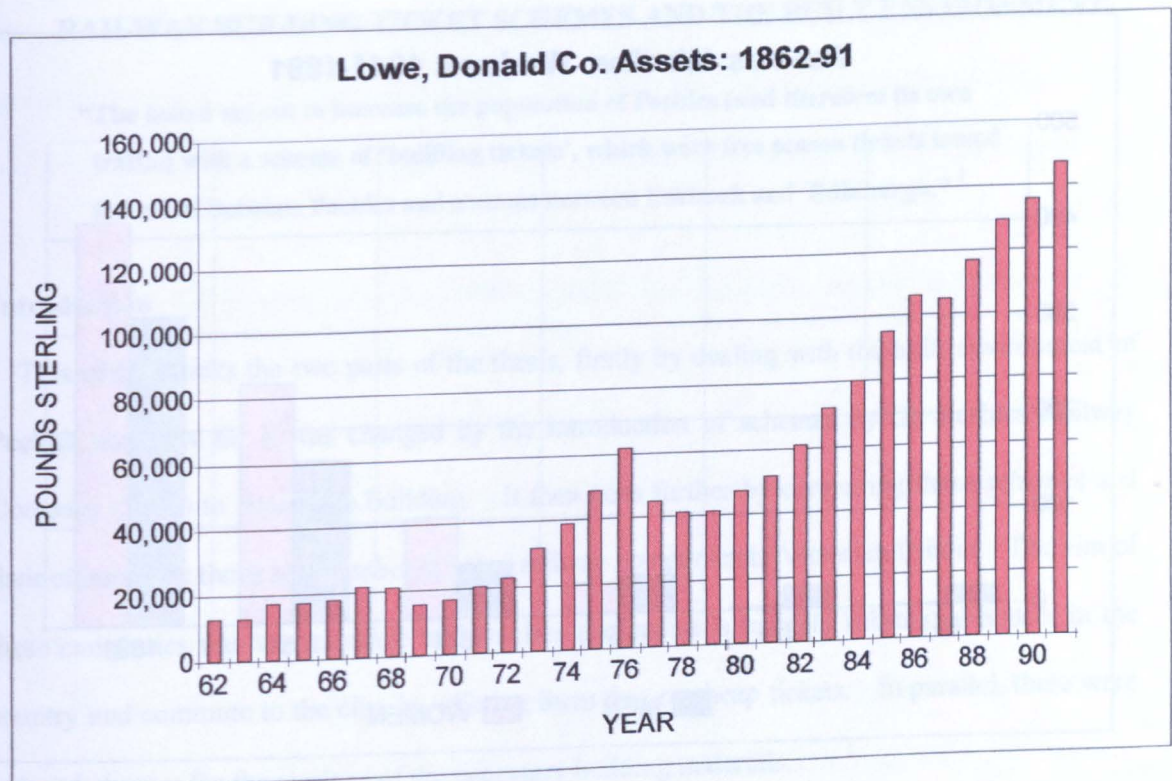


Fig.10-8. Assets and profits of Lowe, Donald Co. 1862-91.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> Figures from the Lowe, Donald balance sheets, 1862-91, courtesy of Messrs Holland & Sherry.

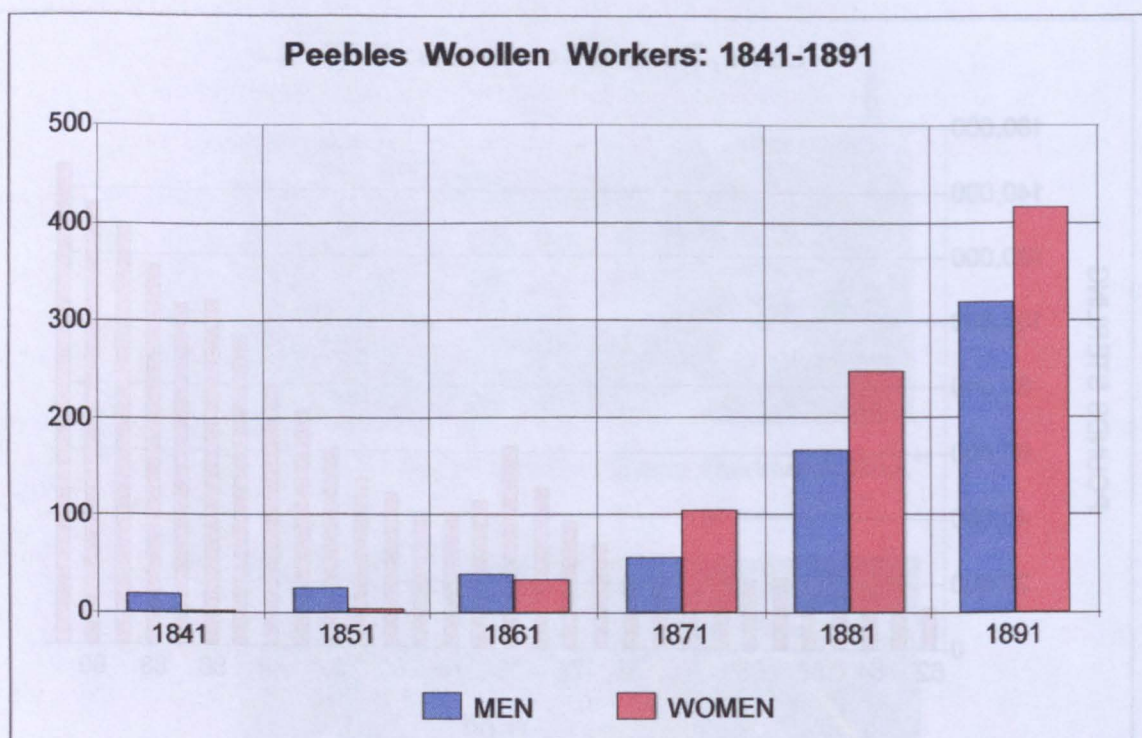


Fig.10-9. Numbers employed in the Peebles woollen industry: 1841-1891.<sup>45</sup>

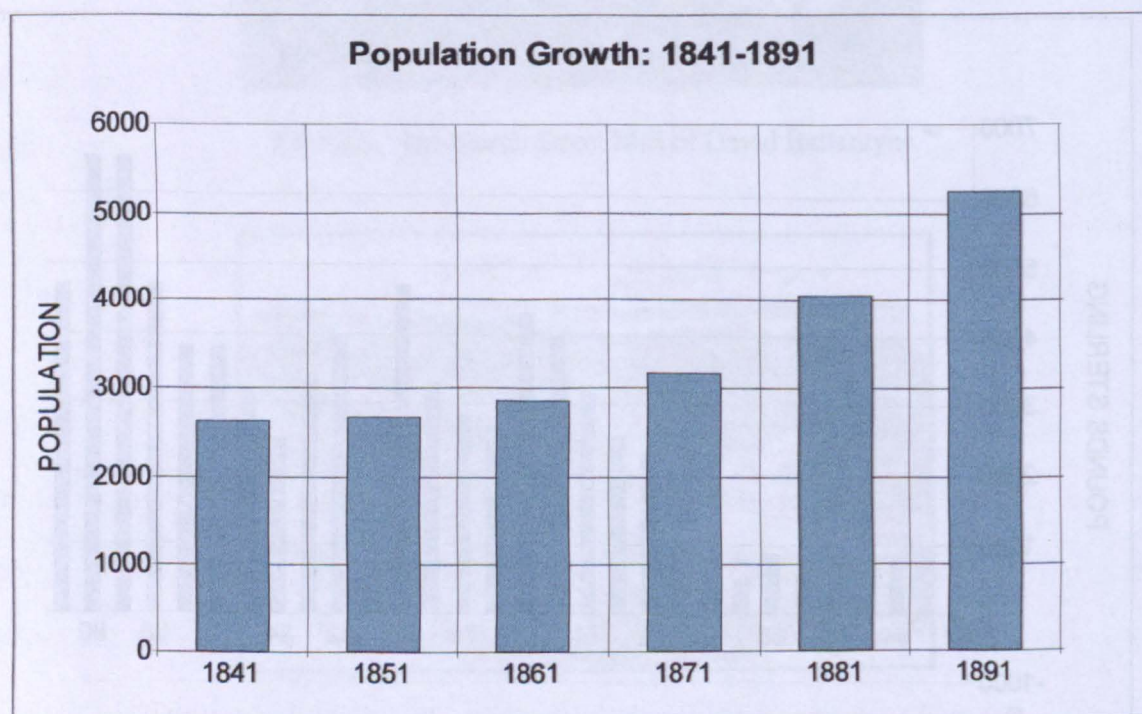


Fig.10-10. Population figures for the Parish of Peebles: 1841-1891.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>45</sup> Data derived from the various Census Enumerators' Books (Appendix 3).

<sup>46</sup> Figures from the Registrar-General for Scotland's *Census 1981: Report for Borders Volume 4*.



## RAILWAY BUILDING TICKET SCHEMES AND THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

**“The board set out to increase the population of Peebles (and therefore its own traffic) with a scheme of ‘building tickets’, which were free season tickets issued for travel between Peebles and stations between Eskbank and Edinburgh.”<sup>1</sup>**

### Introduction

This chapter links the two parts of the thesis, firstly by dealing with the built environment of Peebles and how far it was changed by the introduction of schemes by the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) to encourage building. It then goes further by comparing these schemes and their effects with those of a number of other railway companies in Victorian Britain. The aim of these companies was to encourage middle-class professionals to build substantial houses in the country and commute to the city, by offering them free or cheap tickets. In parallel, there were reduced charges for the carriage of the necessary building materials.

The issue of middle-class commuters has been largely neglected in the railway literature. Nevertheless, it is important in the context of Parliament’s refusal to allow railway companies—with one exception—to buy or develop land beyond that strictly required for railway operations. Building tickets, the cheap carriage of building materials and collaboration with landowners and builders were the means by which a number of railway companies gained customers, while evading the prohibition against their becoming property developers.

After comparing the regulations under which a number of mid-nineteenth century railway companies in Britain issued ‘Building tickets’—or ‘Villa’ or ‘Line Residence’ tickets as they were sometimes called—my aim will be to assess to what extent such schemes were successful. Although there were slight variations in the regulations, these tickets were offered to anyone prepared to build a new house, of a minimum pre-set value, within a short distance from a railway station. A detailed case study will be made to gauge the effects of the building ticket

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<sup>1</sup> J. Thomas, *Forgotten Railways: Scotland* (Newton Abbot, 1981) p.36.

and other reduced tariff schemes of the PRC. Finally, a general hypothesis will be advanced, concerning the effectiveness of the various company schemes in promoting suburban development and modifying the built environment of Victorian towns.

### **The Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway Villa Tickets**

The earliest Scottish railway to take an active interest in commuters seems to have been the Edinburgh & Glasgow (E&GR), which was 46 miles in length. An advertisement in August 1841, six months before the line opened, offered “desirable Villa Ground near Glasgow to be feued” next to Kirkintilloch station.<sup>2</sup> This station was just over six miles north-east of Glasgow, and was the second stop along the line: its name was later changed to Lenzie, by which it is better known. It seems that there were no early takers, “but from 1848 building began in earnest.”<sup>3</sup> Two years later the E&GR Board decided to offer free villa tickets to persons erecting substantial houses near the rural stations along the line (see Fig.11-1 for details). These tickets—which presumably were first-class because of the high value of the houses—were available to Glasgow from stations west of Polmont, or to Edinburgh from those east of Polmont (Fig.11-2). The ‘Town Stations’ of Falkirk and Linlithgow did not qualify. Lenzie and Bishopriggs, the two stations nearest to Glasgow, had the greatest number of villa ticket holders.<sup>4</sup>

The pre-eminence of Lenzie as a middle-class conurbation was reinforced after the amalgamation of the E&GR with the North British Railway (NBR) in 1865. “Lenzie became a dormitory suburb for senior North British staff. But when the company began to build two modest cottages for local railwaymen there was an outcry, and the cottages were built elsewhere.”<sup>5</sup> Apart from Lenzie and Bishopriggs, dormitory suburbs were not found on the

<sup>2</sup> D. Martin and A.A. Maclean, *Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway Guidebook* (Glasgow, 1992) p.50. This initiative was probably the result of collaboration between the E&GR and a separate property developer. (Feuing and Feu Duty were explained in Chapter 7, Note 3 of this thesis.)

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, p.50.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, p.51

<sup>5</sup> J. Thomas, *The North British Railway* (Newton Abbot, 1969) Vol.1, p.174.

fringes of Victorian Glasgow, and the city remained relatively compact. The general situation was the reverse of that seen in London, for the majority lived in the densely populated centre of Glasgow, worked outside the city, and returned there each evening.<sup>6</sup>

### **The North British Railway Line Residence Tickets**

The PRC building ticket scheme was based on the line residence tickets of the NBR, which exhibit a number of features that are shared by the various schemes promoted by other railway companies. Thomas reveals that each application to the NBR was “considered at a board meeting, and a ticket was granted only on the recommendation of a director or senior officer. It was rather like being proposed for an exclusive club.”<sup>7</sup> According to the rules, the new house had to be built within a mile of a railway station, and its occupier had to carry on a profession or business in Edinburgh, with the journey between the local station and Edinburgh being at least eight miles. The NBR charged £5 per annum for each ticket, with the duration and class of travel dependent upon the annual value of the house. The original NBR rules were:-

<b>Annual Value of House</b>	<b>Validity of Ticket</b>	<b>Class</b>
£25	6 years	2nd
£25 to £35	9 years	1st
£35 to £50	12 years	1st
Over £50	15 years	1st

Thomas does not say when the scheme began, but I found that the NBR Directors approved the details at a Board Meeting on 7 April 1854, following an earlier proposal by their General Manager, Thomas Rowbotham. His suggestion that the Company should “issue at reduced rates Life Tickets [*sic*] to parties building residences on the line of Railway was considered and the principle approved of.”<sup>8</sup> This was probably an attempt to match the villa ticket scheme of the Caledonian Railway (CR), their Scottish rival. Later, there was such a proliferation of NBR

<sup>6</sup> J.R. Kellett, *The Impact of Railways on Victorian Cities* (London, 1969) pp.354-5.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.5) Vol.1, p.113.

<sup>8</sup> NBR Minute Book, (NBRM), 1/3/1854. (NAS/BR/NBR/1/6).

reduced fares—line residence tickets, church passes, free passes, season tickets, contract tickets, school tickets—that on 11 July 1856, the Board asked the NBR Finance Committee to review the regulations “under which passes shall be issued.”<sup>9</sup>

Before we continue the history of line residence tickets, this is a convenient place to deal briefly with the NBR Church Pass scheme. The carriage of passengers on Sundays was an emotive issue in mid-Victorian times, despite the fact that most railways were contractually obliged to run mail trains on that day. The Sabbatarians, a powerful lobby, made a rather dubious distinction between what work was necessary on the Sabbath Day and what behaviour was inappropriate. For example, the running of mail trains and the delivery of letters were acceptable, but the carriage of passengers in those trains was not.<sup>10</sup> The E&GR ran Sunday passenger trains between March 1842 and November 1846, but were then forced to give up because of pressure from shareholders who were members of the Free Church of Scotland.<sup>11</sup> “Compared with Edinburgh, a Sunday in London is positively agreeable.”<sup>12</sup> Sunday services only resumed after the E&GR amalgamated with the NBR in 1865.

Church passes were an attempt to divert the wrath of the Sabbatarians. According to the NBR Board Minutes of 14 November 1856, the scheme was “limited to twenty-six Sundays in the year.” Costing a mere halfpenny a mile, the tickets were “issued in Book Form in triplicate” to adults who stated a desire to attend churches at a distance from their homes. Children were carried free, as long as they were accompanied by a parent. One wonders whether booking clerks had instructions to try and ensure that each request for a church pass was genuine.

<sup>9</sup> NBRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.8) 11/7/1856. (NAS/BR/NBR/1/8).

<sup>10</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (*P.Adv.*) 14/11/1863. In Peebles, the Free Church Minister, the Rev. W.W. Duncan, organised a meeting to petition against the “floods of Sabbath-breakers let loose on our streets.” Yet, the petitioners still wanted their letters on Sundays. As the Editor of the *Advertiser* remarked, “To receive letters on Sunday is very convenient; so is a warm dinner: each is his own judge on what constitutes a necessity.”

<sup>11</sup> Martin and Maclean, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.38.

<sup>12</sup> *Taine's Notes on England* (London, 1857) p.283. in A.K.B. Evans, and J.V. Gough, (eds.) *The Impact of the Railway on Society in Britain: essays in honour of Jack Simmons* (Aldershot, 2003) p.103.

Returning to the NBR line residence ticket regulations, the final version was implemented in November 1861.<sup>13</sup> The principal differences between the new and original rules were as follows. The number of years for which the tickets were valid and the minimum length of journey to Edinburgh were both reduced, the rules on the distance of the house from the station were altered, and the charges were increased. The cost of the ticket was now 5s. per annum<sup>14</sup> for each train mile between the local station and Edinburgh, with a minimum charge of £5. It was not available for travel to intermediate stations.

<b>Revised Rules 1861</b>	<b>Annual Value of House</b>	<b>Validity of Ticket</b>
	£25 and under £30	5 years
	£30 and under £40	6 years
	Over £40	7 years
<b>New houses must be more than six miles from Edinburgh:-</b>		
a.	If 15 miles from Edinburgh, house may be 2 miles from station.	
b.	If 10 miles " " " " " 1½ " " "	
c.	If less than 10 miles " " " " 1 " " "	

There is no mention in the revised line residence rules that all tickets were to be first-class, but this was confirmed in a letter from the NBR to the PRC Board in July 1861 (see p.182). This change was important, as second-class tickets could cause difficulties in a status-conscious Victorian society, as can be seen with the history of villa tickets on the Crieff Junction Railway (CJR). Instead of making them all first-class, the CJR “issued first- or second-class tickets at the discretion of the board, which was a psychological blunder in a place like Crieff where everybody knew everybody’s business.”<sup>15</sup> When a merchant, John White, indignantly returned his second-class ticket, the Board decided to avoid “the invidiousness and unpleasantness of assigning a class to applicants” by abolishing the tickets altogether. A more acceptable scheme was put in place later, in conjunction with the Scottish Central Railway.

<sup>13</sup> NBRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.8) 29/11/1861. (NAS/BR/NBR/1/10).

<sup>14</sup> Conversion of shillings to new pence will be found on page iii. For present day values, figures should be multiplied by a factor of about 60. (*The Oxford Companion to British Railway History*) p.579.

<sup>15</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) pp.120-3.

### **The Caledonian Railway Villa Tickets**

The Caledonian Railway (CR) had instituted a villa ticket scheme almost a year before that of its NBR rival. It offered passes “to resident Proprietors or Tenants of Villas which have commenced to be built within One Mile of any station on the Caledonian Railway, since Whitsunday 1853, such station being distant Seven Miles at least from Glasgow, Edinburgh or Carlisle.”<sup>16</sup> A pass was charged at half the rate of an ordinary season ticket, and, once again, its duration depended on the annual value of the property. A house assessed at £30 a year was eligible for a villa ticket for ten years, and a further year was added for every additional £10 rise in annual value—a ‘£100 villa’ therefore attracted a Caledonian ticket for 17 years. The CR also encouraged its associated companies, such as the Greenock & Wemyss Bay Railway, to operate similar villa ticket schemes.<sup>17</sup> As we saw, seven years was the maximum duration offered by the NBR after 1861, no matter how high the annual value of the house, and Edinburgh remained the only focal point.

### **Detailed Study of reduced tariffs by the Peebles Railway Company**

The suggestion that the Peebles Railway (PR) should follow the example of other railway companies and offer building tickets seems to have come from Sir Adam Hay, the largest landowner in Peebles. He was a former PRC director, now living for most of the year in London.<sup>18</sup> A Board Minute of 23 March 1856 instructs the Secretary, John Bathgate, “to write to Sir Adam Hay as to free passes for parties who might build houses in the neighbourhood and that the Board do not see their way clearly in granting this privilege.” Their perception altered a few months later, for a rather tortuous NBR minute records that a “letter dated 2<sup>d</sup> October from Mr Bathgate as to Building tickets was read and it was resolved to offer to concur in issuing such

<sup>16</sup> *Official Timetables of the Caledonian Railway No 1*. (Edinburgh, August, 1859) p.18. Caledonian Railway Association Collection.)

<sup>17</sup> A.J.C. Clark, *Caley to the Coast* (Usk, 2001) p.114. The Wemyss Bay Railway scheme began in May 1866 for eligible houses built after July 1862, the date when the railway was incorporated.

<sup>18</sup> Sir Adam Hay obviously stood to gain by selling or feuing land for new housing at inflated prices.



only on our own principle.”<sup>19</sup> In other words, it seems that the current £5 NBR line residence ticket charge had to be paid by the PRC on each free building ticket issued.<sup>20</sup> On 6 May 1857, the PRC Directors approved draft regulations for the issue of these tickets, and it was agreed to advertise the scheme in the *Peeblesshire Advertiser* and *The Scotsman* newspapers on a regular basis. The advertisement had first been submitted to the NBR Board for their approval.<sup>21</sup>

The first announcement appeared on 1 July 1857, and read as follows. “The Directors of the Peebles Railway Company, to induce parties to erect dwelling-houses in the vicinity of Peebles, will grant a free ticket, for a term of years, to the Principal occupant of each House of a certain value. For particulars apply to John Bathgate, Secretary.”<sup>22</sup> This notice appeared regularly in the *Advertiser* until the end of 1860, shortly before the NBR began to work the Peebles line under the 1861 Leasing Agreement. The printed rules of the scheme—shown in Fig.11-3, and to which reference should now be made—were pasted into the PRC Minute Book, being initialled by the Chairman, Sir Graham Montgomery.

Although not specifically stated in these rules, the tickets were for first-class travel. Only when second- or third-class tickets were issued—usually for some specific purpose not connected with the occupancy of a new house—was the class stated. As with the NBR, each application for a building ticket was dealt with at a Board Meeting, and details were noted in the Minute Book. Unfortunately, there was little consistency in the amount of information entered, and important details were frequently omitted, such as the location of the house in Peebles, or its value, or the duration of the ticket. Another inconsistency was that the Directors did not always abide by the printed rules.

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<sup>19</sup> NBRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.8) 10/10/1856. (NAS/BR/NBR/1/8).

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*, 27/3/1857.

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, 17/4/1857.

<sup>22</sup> *P Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10) 1/7/1857.

**1. Granted Building Tickets according to the Rules.**

Peter Croall	2/6/1858	Coachbuilder, Elders Croft. House cost £600.	(Thorburn)
Mr Alexander Tod	6/4/1859	St Mary's Mount, Springhill, value £100+ p.a.	(Thorburn)
James Dickson	26/4/1859	Chartered Accountant, Smithfield Hill.	(Sir Adam Hay)
Dr Alex Munro	1/6/1859	Physician, Oak Villa, Springhill.	(Thorburn)
William Smith	6/7/1859	£510 house, Smithfield Hill.	(Sir Adam Hay)
Peter Burn	30/8/1859	House at Springhill. Annuitant and property owner.	(Thorburn)
Mr Swann	2/11/1859	£30 p.a. house.	(Dickson)
Mr Roy	30/1/1861	Edinburgh merchant.	?
Mr Richards	30/1/1861	Edinburgh.	?
Mrs Walkinshaw	9/4/1861	Annuitant, Tenant of Birch Villa, Springhill.	(Thorburn)
Mr Edey	26/6/1861	Jeweller, St Mary's Villa, Old Town; £35 p.a. house.	(Dickson)
Mr Plenderleith	26/6/1861	Retired farmer, Venlaw Hill; £30 p.a. house.	(Sir Adam Hay)
Miss A. Alexander	26/7/1861	Annuitant, Montgomery Villa, Springhill.	(Thorburn)

**2. Building tickets when Rules not followed.**

James Bertram	3/6/1857	£35 p.a. house in Langate, Peebles. 6-year ticket	(Beattie)
George Beattie	3/6/1857	£40 p.a. house in Langate, Peebles. 7-year ticket	(Beattie)
James Browning	6/10/1858	Initially refused. Owned private boarding school in Peebles.	(Thorburn)

**3. Refused Tickets.**

Mr Newbery	4/8/1858	Ticket "could only be issued according to Rules."
Mr Wolfe Murray	21/11/1860	Cringletie House, near Peebles. "Too far from station."

**4. Tickets for householders not resident in Peebles.**

H.D. Fergusson	10/10/1857	£100+ house at Hawthornden. Terms as for NBR.
Mr Hope	3/2/1858	Contract Ticket for one year, price £5.
I.W.F. Drummond	2/6/1858	Pass between Hawthornden and Edinburgh.

Table 11-1. Complete list of Building Ticket entries in the PRC Minute Book.

The first two tickets were granted on 3 June 1857, before the advertisements began to appear, and did not conform to the rules. James Bertram, an engineer of Leith Walk, Edinburgh,

received a six-year ticket for a house in the Langate with an annual value of £35.<sup>23</sup> George Beattie, a builder from Lothian Road, Edinburgh, was granted a seven-year ticket for a house, also in the Langate, valued at £40. In 1857, Whitsunday fell on 31 May,<sup>24</sup> only three days before the PRC Board Meeting at which the tickets were approved. Unless these houses were occupied before 31 May—thereby breaking Rule 1 (Fig.11-3)—the two applicants could not have fulfilled Rule 3, as their names would not have appeared on the Peebles Valuation Roll for 1857-1858 until the following October. Both houses were probably built by Beattie for Walter Thorburn, a PRC Director, for an earlier editorial in the *Advertiser* had revealed that Thorburn would be building houses costing £500 each in the Langate.<sup>25</sup>

Walter Thorburn was also engaged in the speculative development of a number of substantial villas in Springhill, south of the River Tweed, (Fig.11-7) employing Beattie as his building contractor. An announcement appearing on 1 December 1857 in the *Advertiser* offered “to Sell or Let, with a free ticket over the Peebles Railway for seven years, two villas at Springhill. Apply to Mr Thorburn, Banker, Peebles, the Owner; or to George Beattie, Esq., Builder, No 5 Lothian Road, Edinburgh.” Similar Thorburn advertisements continued to appear from time to time. Although Beattie had been granted a PRC building ticket, the house in the Langate was probably built to sell or let, for the District Census Enumerator’s Book in 1861 reveals that the Beattie family were now living in a 15-room villa in Springhill. In parallel with Thorburn, Sir Adam Hay was having houses built for sale or rent on Smithfield Hill, east of the NBR station shown in Fig.11-7, as was Alexander Dickson in other parts of Peebles. The latter had also been the building contractor for the PR station in Peebles, and for the level-crossing houses. Hay and Dickson are named in five of the building ticket applications (Table 11-1).

<sup>23</sup> The Langate was the previous name for Rosetta Road,, shown north of the Old Town in Fig.11-7.

<sup>24</sup> Date derived from the 2002 Whitaker’s Almanac, pp. 90-2.

<sup>25</sup> *P Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10) 1/11/1856.

There are several more examples where the Board had ignored the rules. In October 1857, a Mr Fergusson from Hawthornden was allowed to break the 'location of house' rule because of the size of the mansion he was building (valued at over £100 per annum), and because of the business brought to the railway by his contractors and tradesmen. As he was about to live close to the Eskbank end of the line, his ticket was granted "on the same proportional terms as he may obtain a ticket from the NB Railway Coy."<sup>26</sup> So, his ticket was not free, and he would have to pay a little more than the £5 a year NBR charge. A few months later, payment was demanded for a pass for a Mr Hope, about whom no further details were given.

On the other hand, two applicants, Mr Browning and Mr Newbery, were refused tickets in the summer of 1858 "as they can only be granted according to rules"<sup>27</sup>—rules which had been ignored in other cases. However, James Browning M.A. was the proprietor of a boarding school for boys, Bonnington Park Academy, that occupied two of the new villas in Springhill, and he succeeded in getting a building ticket two months later. Although his business was in Peebles, contrary to Rule 3, Browning probably persuaded the PRC Directors to grant him a building ticket because of the amount of traffic generated by boys and their parents or guardians, at the beginning and end of each term. Alexander Tod, who was building a large villa in Springhill, asked what extension of years he could expect on his ticket if he built "a house of greater value" than those listed.<sup>28</sup> He also was told that "no alteration or addition to the rules could be made." The final six building tickets were issued by the PRC in 1861. A complete list of all the applications made to the PRC Board between 1857 and 1861—successful or otherwise—is given in Table 11-1, which also contains supplementary information derived from Census records. From this list, it appears that the PRC Directors issued only 16 building tickets to Peebles householders in just over four years.

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<sup>26</sup> PRC Minute Book, (PRM) 10/10/1857. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/3).

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*, 21/7/1858.

<sup>28</sup> *ibid.*, 6/4/1859. The 1861 Census shows that Alexander Tod's house, St Mary's Mount, had 17 rooms, and was the largest villa to be built in Springhill (Fig.11-7).

What do these 16 tickets represent in terms of the population of Peebles? The owners or tenants of eleven of the 16 villas in Table 11-1 are named in the Census Enumerators' Books of 1861.<sup>29</sup> Rather surprisingly for this period, the average household size in ten of these villas was only six people (including servants).<sup>30</sup> The eleventh was the big exception. Mr Browning's boarding school occupied two large houses known as 'Woodvillas', and, excluding the pupils, his family, teachers and servants numbered seventeen in all. Suppose we assume that the average household size in the missing five villas was eight. We may then conclude that in the four years the PRC ran the building ticket scheme, a maximum of about 110 people were added to the Peebles population. Although not itself a great number, it represents almost two-thirds of the increased parish population—totalling 181—between 1851 and 1861.

<b>Year</b>	<b>1801</b>	<b>1811</b>	<b>1821</b>	<b>1831</b>	<b>1841</b>	<b>1851</b>	<b>1861</b>	<b>1871</b>	<b>1881</b>	<b>1891</b>
<b>Population</b>	<b>2088</b>	<b>2485</b>	<b>2701</b>	<b>2750</b>	<b>2629</b>	<b>2669</b>	<b>2850</b>	<b>3172</b>	<b>4055</b>	<b>5258</b>

Table 11-2. Population figures for the parish of Peebles.<sup>31</sup>

Unfortunately, the NBR Minutes do not reveal how many line residence tickets were issued to Peebles householders after the 1861 leasing agreement. In the following 30 years the population of Peebles increased by 2,408, but, from the 6-inch Ordnance Survey maps of Peebles, I have been unable to identify more than 38 large new villas during this period. And, some of these would have been built for people who were not entitled to line residence tickets. At best, these tickets could not have accounted for more than about a seventh of the 30-year increase, a large percentage drop from the initial two-thirds we saw in the previous paragraph. The big building expansion was north and west of the Cuddy or Eddleston Water (Fig.11-7), to house the families of woollen mill workers whose numbers, according to Census data, had risen from 92 to 793.

<sup>29</sup> Microfilm Census records of Peebles Parish are held at Scottish Borders Council Archives, Selkirk.

<sup>30</sup> The Census records reveal that none of the servants in the villas or the boarding school had been born in Peebles.

<sup>31</sup> Parish figures are used here because Springhill and the Langate were in the landward area until the burgh boundaries were extended in 1896. The figures for 1801 to 1831 are from the 'Abstract of Answers and Returns' under the decennial Population Acts. The rest are from the *Census 1981: Report for Borders Volume.4*. (Edinburgh, HMSO, 1982).

Occasionally, free passes were granted by the PRC for reasons apart from the erection of new houses (Table 11-3). One example is that of Messrs Wylie and Peddie, the Edinburgh firm of civil engineers, who were surveying the route for the proposed Innerleithen & Peebles Railway.<sup>32</sup> This project was of particular interest to the PRC as it promised to be a useful feeder, not only for passenger traffic, but also for the transport of raw materials and finished goods to and from the Innerleithen woollen mills. The Board also acceded to a request from the Chief Constable of Peeblesshire to give third-class passes to a police sergeant and a constable, for travel between Peebles and other stations within the county.<sup>33</sup> In connection with the abortive amalgamation talks between the NBR and PRC in 1858, Thomas Rowbotham, the NBR Manager, obtained a first-class pass on 6 October at a reduced rate. Similarly, the NBR Engineer, Mr Jopp, received a pass on 8 February 1860 when the PRC leasing arrangements were being discussed.

The final PRC building ticket was issued on 26 July 1861, after Rowbotham had written to the PRC Board earlier in the month. "The Peebles scheme for these tickets differs from the North British one, and it is desirable that one Company should not have different schemes on such a subject. I propose therefore, without interfering with the rights of existing current tickets, to modify the two schemes into one."<sup>34</sup> Article 9 of the 1861 leasing agreement had stated that, "The present practice of the Peebles Board in reference to Passenger fares, Return and other tickets to be adhered to, and no changes either in increasing or lessening the fares to be made without the sanction of the Peebles Board."<sup>35</sup> In the same letter, Rowbotham detailed the proposed regulations for the new PRC line residence tickets, which were all to be first-class. These regulations were identical to the NBR revised rules we noted earlier, and the PRC Board "resolved that the aforesaid rules be approved of."<sup>36</sup> The principal change after they were

<sup>32</sup> PRM *op.cit.*, (ref.26) 6/10/1858. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/3).

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, 26/7/1861.

<sup>34</sup> *ibid.*, 15/12/1858.

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, 30/10/1860.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*, 26/7/1861.

implemented in November 1861 meant that the owner of a new villa in Peebles had to apply to the NBR for the ticket, and pay £6 15s. annually for the 27-mile journey to Edinburgh.

Nevertheless, it seems that some problems remained between the NBR and PRC over the issue of building tickets, which were not finally settled until 1864. For example, the PRC Board intervened on 18 March 1864 when the NBR refused a line residence ticket to a Mr Thomas Duncan. His house “was built on the understanding that a Free Ticket would be given to it under the Peebles Railway Company’s rules, and further that an adjoining House precisely in the same category does possess the privilege of a ticket.”<sup>37</sup> Rowbotham replied that Mr Duncan was not included “in the list of Line Residence Tickets handed to this Coy by the Peebles Coy when the lease came into operation.” It is not clear whether he ever received his ticket, although the PRC Secretary had been told “to represent that the name must have been left out by mere inadvertence.”<sup>38</sup> In the same reply, Rowbotham also complained that the PRC Board were still issuing free passes when there had been no agreement to that effect, and that “such Passes cannot and will not be recognised.”

Instead of issuing season tickets like most other railway companies, the PRC had a type of reduced-fare passenger ticket that may well have been unique. During the Board Meeting held on 1 December 1858, the Directors ordered ‘special return tickets’ to be issued to Mr Veitch, a local builder who later became a member of Peebles Town Council. “Remit to the Secretary to frame regulations for such tickets.” The printed rules for special return tickets appeared six months later and were pasted into the PRC Minute Book on 1 June 1859 (Fig.11-4). Once again, the Directors dealt with every application, although the following month they decided that successful applicants would not have to re-apply to the Board when they wished to buy a further batch of tickets. Table 11-3 provides a list of those holding passes or special return tickets. By

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<sup>37</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.26) 12/2/1864. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/3).

<sup>38</sup> *ibid.*, 30/3/1864.

this time, the normal first-class return fare between Peebles and Edinburgh had been reduced from the original 7s. to 6s.6d.,<sup>39</sup> and the special return tickets, bought in quantities of a dozen at a time, cost 4s.6d. for each return journey. The one restriction was that each batch of a dozen tickets had to be used within a 12-week period. Although they could only be bought at Peebles station, the first leg of the round trip could start from Peebles or from Edinburgh.

### 1. Granted Free or Reduced Fare Tickets.

Mr Milne	7/7/1858	Solicitor for the Innerleithen & Peebles Railway Bill.
Wylie & Peddie	6/10/1858	Engineers for the proposed Innerleithen & Peebles Railway.
T.K. Rowbotham	6/10 1858	Gen. Mgr. NBR—amalgamation discussions with PRC.
Ninian Notman	15/12/1858	Two 3 <sup>rd</sup> class tickets (Peebles-Leadburn) for use by Police.
Robt. Stirling Snr.	1/6/1859	PRC auditor.
Mr Jopp	8/2/1860	NBR Engineer.
Charles Cowan	5/9/1860	Pass Penicuik-Eskbank until 31/12/1860.
Geo. Cunningham	20/12/1860	Pass for one year.

### 2. Special Return Tickets.

Mr Veitch	1/12/1858	Peebles builder.
Mr MacLagan	1/6/1859	
Dr Thomas Robson	7/12/1859	Rector of the Grammar School.
M. Chastelaine	18/4/1860	Peebles dancing master.
Geo. Bathgate	16/5/1860	Solicitor, half-brother of John Bathgate.
Alexander Dowell	20/6/1860	
Lt. Col. Forbes	20/6/1860	Tenant of William Chambers estate of Glenormiston.
Alexander Tod	18/7/1860	Building ticket holder, "For his family and visitors."
David Anderson	18/7/1860	Lyne.
Sir Adam Hay	15/8/1860	Former PRC director, for himself and family.
Mr Russell	15/8/1860	
James McLaren	5/9/1860	Smith & McLaren, Leith.
John Gillow	5/9/1860	For himself and family, Leith.

Table 11-3. List of free or reduced-fare PRC passes and special return tickets.

<sup>39</sup> PRM, *op.cit.*, (ref.26) 7/4/1858. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/3).



Probably influenced by Thorburn, there was another kind of PRC concessionary tariff concerned with building, which was probably of more value to the growth of Peebles than the free passes for heads of households. "With the view of encouraging building operations, and so promoting the settlement of strangers, we understand that the directors of the railway have under consideration the propriety of carrying brick and other materials at a reduced rate."<sup>40</sup> When this proposal was agreed to by the Board, according to William Chambers the use of new building materials brought about a change in the outward appearance of Peebles. From houses uniformly built of whinstone obtained from quarries within a short distance of the town, the new villas "were now generally of better style with fronts of sandstone," while the traditional thatched roofs of humbler dwellings began to give way to slate.<sup>41</sup> Because of its high quality and ease of working, most of this slate came from Wales, as local slate from a quarry in Stobo, seven miles from Peebles, was of inferior quality. After the PR had been leased to the NBR in 1861, at the instance of the PRC Directors the NBR conveyed Musselburgh sandstone to Peebles at 3s. per ton, so that it was almost as cheap as that being used in Edinburgh.<sup>42</sup> Later, when the Caledonian line between Peebles and Symington opened in 1864, the CR brought in supplies of Dumfriesshire sandstone. Coupled with increasing prosperity in the town, the result was that local builders were busy on a range of new public and private buildings.

"When a hydropathic institution was promoted in the town the railway promised the proprietors and officials free travel for twenty years for every £1,000 spent," and a 25 per cent reduction on the carriage of building materials.<sup>43</sup> In addition, the contractors' men were to be carried free during the construction phase, while afterwards, Edinburgh doctors would be granted reduced fares when coming to Peebles on Hydro business. Surprisingly, I found that the PRC Directors had approved these concessions at a Board Meeting in September 1860 after an

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<sup>40</sup> *P Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10) 1/7/1856.

<sup>41</sup> W. Chambers, *Peebles and its Neighbourhood with a Run on Peebles Railway* (Edinburgh, 1863) p.43.

<sup>42</sup> *P Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10) 6/11/1861.

<sup>43</sup> Thomas, *op.cit.*, (ref.5) p.36.

approach by a James Middlemas. This was 18 years before construction began on the magnificent French Renaissance-style Peebles Hydropathic.<sup>44</sup> By 1878, the PRC had been wound up for two years, but it seems probable that—with an eye to future traffic—the NBR and CR honoured the earlier agreement.<sup>45</sup> Some of the Hydro building material brought in by the CR consisted of Corncockle sandstone from near Lockerbie, Dumfriesshire, and Welsh slates.

Unlike large railway companies such as the Caledonian, the PRC Board concerned themselves with the minutiae of management. So, a fairly clear picture of the effects of their building ticket scheme has emerged from the combination of information in the PRC Minute Books and the Peebles Census records. The availability of these tickets between 1857 and 1861 caused only a small increase in the population of Peebles, and there is no evidence to suggest that after 1861 the NBR line residence ticket scheme was any more successful. Only a handful of commuters travelled into Edinburgh on a daily basis. One possible reason for this low number is that at 27 miles, Peebles was too far from Edinburgh to attract immigrants on a similar scale to those drawn into Ilford by commuters to London (see pages 190-2). However, there is no doubt that the cheap carriage of building materials did have an impact on the provision of new houses, civic buildings and industrial premises in Peebles.

There were aesthetic as well as practical reasons why this should be so. Fullarton's 1851 Gazetteer described Peebles as follows. "The aggregate aspect of all Peebles, in spite of the place occupying one of the most charming sites, and being curtailed with one of the most delightful landscapes in Scotland, is rendered cold and dingy by the prevalence of grey and ashy blue in the hues of its masonry."<sup>46</sup> Apart from the sandstone surrounds of doors and windows, whinstone—a material difficult to work, and locally known as greywacke from its colour—was

<sup>44</sup> PRM *op.cit.*, (ref.26) 19/9/1860. (NAS/BR/PBR/1/3).

<sup>45</sup> However, a search of the NBR and CR Minute Books failed to verify this.

<sup>46</sup> Fullarton's *Topographical, Statistical and Historical Gazetteer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1851) Vol.2, p.493, a description repeated in *An Abridged Statistical History of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1853) p.762.

the universal building material in Peebles. At this time the Town Council owned a large whinstone quarry on the side of Smithfield Hill, and it probably provided the stone for many of the new working-class houses that were built north of the Old Town. On the other hand, the middle-class villas on Springhill were fronted with sandstone, while the remaining outside walls were either of sandstone or brick, or of whinstone rubble covered by a cement rendering. Like the Peebles Hydropathic that was built of sandstone, few of the new public buildings used whinstone. So, the dictates of fashion had overcome tradition, with the result that today there are only two buildings in Peebles High Street that reveal the dark blue-grey of the whinstone. Of the other buildings, half are of sandstone, while the rest, like the Tontine Hotel (Fig.11-5), have their whinstone covered by paint or pebbledash.

Aesthetics apart, the 1858 six-inch Ordnance Survey map of Peebles shows 29 abandoned whinstone quarries within a radius of two miles of the town, so it is possible that the best local sites were already worked out. On the other hand, it was Government legislation to remove a fire hazard that helped Welsh slates to become the standard roofing material in Peebles. Clause 348 of the General Police and Improvement (Scotland) Act, 1862, states that "a roof covered with thatch or other combustible material, and contiguous to or adjoining to any other building" should be removed within seven years.<sup>47</sup> Most of the remaining thatched cottages appear to have been in the Old Town of Peebles.<sup>48</sup>

From the Census returns (Table 11-2), it can be seen that the population of the Parish increased very little between 1841 and 1861. By 1861, the impact on the town's population as a result of the PR was just becoming apparent, and the effect was further boosted by the arrival of the CR from Symington in 1864 and the NBR from Galashiels in 1866. Interpolating from the Census figures, the Parish population probably increased by as much as 85 per cent between

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<sup>47</sup> *P Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.10) 18/10/1873.

<sup>48</sup> *Fullarton*, *op.cit.*, (ref.46) p.493. "The houses of the Old Town, though in a few instances modern, are so generally old and thatched, as to have a pervadingly wan and wealthless aspect."

1855 and 1891, but the incentive of building tickets was responsible for only a small fraction of this increase. Many houses had been built for incoming workers for the woollen mills and railways, and the *Peeblesshire Advertiser* commented on the subject in its review of the year 1879. "While other towns were suffering severely from great depression in trade, the commercial character of Peebles was at least maintained. Building operations have been carried on in an extensive scale. Paradoxically put, in the neighbourhood of the Old Town a new town has been erected."<sup>49</sup> This development can be clearly seen in the 1906 Ordnance Survey map of Peebles (Fig.11-7) to the north and west of the Cuddy, which, before the arrival of the PR, had consisted of farmland and market gardens (Chapter 2, Fig.2-2).

However, each Census from 1851 to 1881 reveals an increasing number of lodgers in the town (from 99 to 253), and the Editor of the *Advertiser* constantly complained of the continuing shortage of working-class dwellings in Peebles. Conversely, the efforts of Thorburn and Beattie had created "the beautiful suburb of Springhill,"<sup>50</sup> south of the River Tweed, and large detached houses were also to be seen on land belonging to Sir Adam Hay on Smithfield Hill and the road leading towards Innerleithen. But, many of these villas had been built for existing residents of the town or county, or for people who had chosen to retire in Peebles now that it had good railway communications with Edinburgh and Glasgow. 'Annuitant' and 'Fund holder' had begun to appear in the 'Occupation' column of the Census Enumerators' Books.

By 1891, no doubt encouraged by increasing revenues and the availability of relatively cheap stone, bricks and slates, the Town Council had built a new Corn Exchange and had enlarged and rebuilt the Burgh and Grammar Schools. Peebles had also gained an imposing new Parish Church (Fig.11-6), a Sheriff Courthouse, two boarding schools, the Hydro and three other hotels. Most important of all, it now had a viable industry, with four woollen mills and the biggest tweed

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<sup>49</sup> *P Adv., op.cit.*, (ref.10) 3/1/1880.

<sup>50</sup> *ibid.*, 23/2/1867.

warehouse in the south of Scotland. These mills could not have located in the town before the railways, as they were dependent upon supplies of cheap coal from Midlothian and Lanarkshire: the price of coal had halved overnight in Peebles with the opening of the PR in 1855.<sup>51</sup> Thanks to the railways, foreign as well as British woollen buyers, tourists and day-trippers were now a regular feature in the hotels, public houses and streets of Peebles. The town was no longer the dormant backwater it had been during the first half of century.

### **Railway companies and property developers**

While allowing railway companies the privilege of compulsory purchase when taking the land they required, Parliament had decided that—with the sole exception of the London Metropolitan Railway—they should be prohibited from buying and developing land for non-railway operations. This raised a problem for railway directors wanting to venture into sparsely populated territory, with the hope of providing for long-term increases in traffic. Should they take the financial risk of building a new line in anticipation of future housing developments aimed at their favourite customers, the affluent professional classes? On the other hand, passively waiting for third party initiatives might encourage the prior intrusion of a rival railway company into their territory. One answer to this dilemma was for railway boards to co-operate with landowners and property developers, and to offer them the inducements of building ticket schemes and reduced freight charges for building materials. We shall now look at three contrasting examples in England where this occurred.

Earlier, we noted the entrepreneurial activities in Peebles of Walter Thorburn, PRC director, property developer, banker, woollen merchant and Town Councillor. Thorburn began to feu building land from the Council in 1857, the year when the PRC Board first agreed to grant free passes between Peebles and Edinburgh. No doubt he was solidly behind this project and also of

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<sup>51</sup> Chambers, *op.cit* (ref.41) p.9.

the reduced charges for carrying building materials. The South Eastern Railway (SER) building ticket scheme was aimed at developers such as Thorburn.

Like the examples we have already seen so far, the SER was a company that actively encouraged residential development, as it “clearly realised that profits would be higher if season-ticket travel was from stations further out of London.”<sup>52</sup> In November 1854, the SER issued a list of stations where it offered special terms to builders. Any builder who erected more than six houses within two miles of one of these stations would be given one free season ticket per house—the number of years depending on the value of the house—and he would also enjoy a 25 per cent reduction in freight charges for his materials. These concessions applied to country stations on the Guildford and Hastings routes, to stations between Redhill and Tonbridge, and between Woolwich and Gravesend. The scheme appears to have paid dividends since the SER receipts for season tickets rose from £14,460 in 1852 to £130,140 in 1877.<sup>53</sup>

On the other hand, the Lynn & Hunstanton Railway was built as the result of co-operation between a landowner and a railway company. It was conceived specifically as a holiday line, and was the brainchild of Henry le Strange, a major Norfolk landowner, and Lightly Simpson, a Director of the East Anglian Railway.<sup>54</sup> Hunstanton was a small coastal village in 1861, with a population of about 500. When the railway opened in October 1862, the terminus was on a greenfield site south of the village, adjacent to a speculative development by le Strange consisting of 90 villas that were still under construction. To keep costs down, the railway promoters persuaded many of the landowners along the 15-mile line to accept shares instead of cash for their land. An unanticipated boost to the popularity of this railway came when the Prince of Wales, the future King Edward VII, bought the Sandringham estate.

<sup>52</sup> A. Gray, *The South Eastern Railway* (Midhurst, 1990) pp.285-6.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, p.286.

<sup>54</sup> S.C. Jenkins, *The Lynn & Hunstanton Railway and the West Norfolk Branch* (Usk, 1987) p.5.

A final and an outstanding example of railway and builder co-operation is to be found in Ilford, Essex. “There had been a station here since 1839 but the following 50 years saw little growth in the small community it served.”<sup>55</sup> However, in the 1890s and early 1900s, the Great Eastern Railway (GER) began to work closely with Archibald Cameron Corbett, a large-scale property developer. His middle-class housing estates in Ilford were ideally situated for City commuters, being less than eight miles east of Liverpool Street station, the GER London terminus. What was fascinating in this case was that Corbett offered a financial guarantee to the GER, on condition that it provided a new railway station to serve his 107-acre Downshall estate.<sup>56</sup> Even before the first house was built, he was confident that by the end of five years the cumulative passenger receipts from this new station would reach at least £10,000. If they failed to reach this figure, Corbett pledged that he would make up the difference, and, as evidence of his good faith, he deposited £1,000 with the GER. The station, Seven Kings, was duly opened on 1 March 1899, the middle-class commuters took up residence, and Corbett kept his deposit. After the GER had installed extra tracks, the best journey time into Liverpool Street was reduced to 15 minutes. “In the busiest hour, 8.30 to 9.30, there were then 15 trains to the City.”<sup>57</sup>

The population of Ilford grew from 10,913 in 1891 to 41,234 in 1901, and the number of houses from 1,950 to 7,649. Corbett and the GER had a similar arrangement to that at Downshall for another station, Goodmayes, to serve his 330-acre Mayfield Estate.<sup>58</sup> By 1903 he had sold over 3,000 houses in Ilford, while several smaller developers had built a further 3,000. The commuter town was now producing over a million passenger journeys a year.<sup>59</sup> But there was a downside to this development as Ilford was split into two by the railway as Fig.11-8 clearly shows. “The leading ambition of every right-minded Ilfordian is to migrate as speedily

<sup>55</sup> A.A Jackson *The London Railway Suburb 1850–1914* in Evans and Gough, *op.cit.*, (ref.12) p.175.

<sup>56</sup> W. Lewis in an Open University AT308 project essay on Cameron Corbett and Ilford. (2002, 29pp.), quoting from a Lewisham Local History Pamphlet (1973) by O. Cole.

<sup>57</sup> A.A. Jackson, *Semi-Detached London* (Didcot, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1991) p.41.

<sup>58</sup> Evans and Gough, *op.cit.*, (ref.12) p.176.

<sup>59</sup> Lewis, *op.cit.*, (ref.56) p.9.

as possible from one side of the line to the other”—that is, from south to north. So wrote a local resident to the *London Evening News* on 3 October 1907.<sup>60</sup> He presumably did not mean to include the Mayfield Estate (Fig.11-8). In Peebles, the Town Council refused to allow the NBR line from Galashiels to cut across the Northgate (Chapter 7, p.121), but the town was still effectively divided by the River Tweed. Another problem in Ilford was that Corbett relied on others to bring amenities to his estates, so that the inhabitants initially referred to the Downshall Estate as the ‘Klondyke’, because of its lack of shops and services such as street lighting.

### **Building tickets and suburban growth**

From the various schemes considered in this chapter, we shall now attempt an evaluation of the impact of free or reduced-fare building tickets on the growth of commuting in Victorian Britain. As has been shown from primary sources, after a reasonable start the direct impact on Peebles was not particularly great, and a further search of the secondary literature reveals that this was also true of other locations. According to Perkin, a building ticket scheme of the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) near London had only a limited effect, even though the terms were more generous than those of the PRC. Houses built in Harrow with a rental value of £50 per annum attracted a free pass for a period of 11 years, and for 21 years at Tring and Leighton, “but very few were taken up and suburban traffic from the main-line stations was very light.”<sup>61</sup> Simmons tells us that the LNWR had another scheme “at Alderley Edge, south of Manchester, as early as 1846,” but he gives no information as to how effective it was.<sup>62</sup> Kellett confirms that the introduction of eleven-year villa tickets by the Caledonian had little impact on commuting to Glasgow from the Dumbartonshire and Ayrshire coasts.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>60</sup> Jackson, *op.cit.*, (ref.57) p.40.

<sup>61</sup> H. Perkin, *The Age of the Railway* (London, 1970) p.247.

<sup>62</sup> J. Simmons, *The Victorian Railway* (London, paperback edition, 1995) p.326.

<sup>63</sup> Kellett, *op.cit.*, (ref.6) pp.354-5.



It should also be borne in mind that there were companies such as the Great Western Railway, which initially showed little or no interest in catering for the residents of suburbia. Indeed, Thompson states that “the prevailing view is that only in a few exceptional cases can railways be regarded as an important cause of suburban growth.”<sup>64</sup> In his judgement, railways were “a necessary, though not a sufficient, condition for outer suburban growth.”<sup>64</sup> Ilford may possibly be one of Thompson’s exceptional cases, but its rapid growth was due to a co-operative effort between the GER and a property developer. I have not seen any evidence that the GER issued building tickets in Ilford, but when associated with Corbett—who sold his houses at very competitive prices (Fig.11-9)—the Company probably had no need to offer further inducements.

Excluding the isolated developments at Lenzie and the country stations of the SER, our other examples tend to bear out the contention that building ticket schemes probably had little impact in England and Scotland. It is therefore possible to argue that the availability of free or cheap tickets for commuters was less important for the growth of suburbia than reduced rates for the transport of building materials. The evidence suggests that this was certainly true for Peebles. But, further research would be required to see whether this hypothesis is tenable for the other railway schemes in Britain. However, cheap freight tariffs—coupled with efficiently-produced, low-cost building materials—did have some effect on the built environment of the new Victorian suburbs over much of the country. The widespread use of Bedfordshire bricks and Welsh slates is evidence of this.

Having made comparisons between the building ticket schemes of the PRC and other railway companies, in the next chapter we will turn to another issue that has received little attention in the literature. This is the effect of local taxation on the railway companies, and why there were differences between Scotland and England in the way in which parish rates were assessed.

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<sup>64</sup> F.M.L. Thompson, (ed.) *The Rise of Suburbia* (Leicester, 1982) p.19.

**The DIRECTORS of the EDINBURGH and GLASGOW RAILWAY COMPANY are prepared**

## FREE TICKETS TO PARTIES WHO MAY

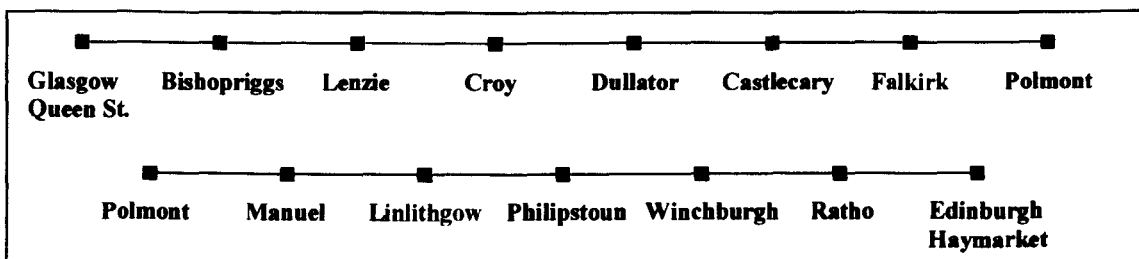
# VILLAS

### Free Ticket for years

<b>£500</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>600</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>700</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>800</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>900</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>1000</b>	<b>10</b>

**Other Information may be known on application at Company's Offices, George Square, Glasgow.**

Fig.11-1. Rules for the issue of Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway Villa tickets.<sup>65</sup>



**Fig.11-2. Principal stations on the Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway.**

<sup>65</sup> This is similar to the original advertisement with its mixture of type fonts and sizes. The reproduction in the *Edinburgh & Glasgow Railway Guidebook* (op.cit., ref.2) was too faint to photocopy well.

## THE PEEBLES RAILWAY COMPANY.

### RULES FOR THE ISSUE OF FREE TICKETS TO PERSONS ERECTING DWELLING-HOUSES.

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1. The House must be built within a radius of One Mile of the Peebles Railway Station, and shall not have been occupied previous to Whitsunday 1857.
2. The period for which a Free Ticket will be granted will vary according to the Annual Value of the House, and shall be as follows :—

Annual Rental, or Assessed Value.	Period during which Tickets will be granted.
£25 and under £30.    -    -    -    -    -	FIVE YEARS.
£30    "    £40.    -    -    -    -    -	SIX    "
£40 and upwards,    -    -    -    -    -	SEVEN    "

3. The Ticket shall be issued to the person whose name shall be in the Valuation Roll for the year as tenant or occupant, provided such occupant shall not follow or practise any trade, manufacture, professional employment, or other business, within a circle of ten miles from Peebles, and shall purposely have come, about the date of his application, from beyond the boundary of said circle to reside within the prescribed limits.
4. Every application must be subject to the approval of the Directors.
5. Holders of Free Tickets shall be subject to the whole Bye-Laws and Regulations applicable to ordinary passengers.
6. Personal Luggage only allowed to be carried. Merchandise being excluded, unless booked and paid for separately.
7. The Tickets are not transferable; but a new Ticket will be issued to any subsequent occupant, after the first, of any house entitled to the privilege, on payment of a fee of twenty shillings.
8. They will not be available at Intermediate Stations.
9. On infringement of any of the Regulations, the Ticket will be forfeited.

The Tickets will be issued subject to these Regulations, and any others additional the Directors may from time to time enact; and power is expressly reserved, on the part of the Company, to make such Rules regarding these Tickets as the Directors may find necessary or expedient: provided always that no change shall be made on the period for which any Ticket shall have been issued, unless the holder become disqualified, as specified in Rule No. 3.

*The Peebles Railway Company's Office, }  
Peebles, 1st September 1858.*



Fig.11-3. Rules for the issue of Peebles Railway Building tickets.

## THE PEEBLES RAILWAY COMPANY.

### RULES FOR THE ISSUE OF SPECIAL RETURN TICKETS BETWEEN PEEBLES AND EDINBURGH.

1. The Tickets (First Class) are sold at the Peebles Station, in quantities of not less than one dozen—the price of each Ticket being Four Shillings and Sixpence.
2. Every application must be subject to the approval of the Directors.
3. The Tickets will be numbered consecutively, and the party using them must in all cases use the lowest number on hand. The Tickets must not be used at a lower rate than one per week, *i.e.*, that twelve Tickets must be used within *twelve weeks* after the date at which they were issued.
4. Upon the day on which a Ticket is to be used it must be previously handed to the Ticket Clerk, either at Peebles or Edinburgh, to be dated.
5. Holders of Special Return Tickets shall be subject to the whole Byelaws and Regulations applicable to ordinary passengers.
6. Personal Luggage only allowed to be carried, Merchandise being excluded unless booked and paid for separately.
7. The Tickets are not transferable without authority.
8. They will not be available at Intermediate Stations.
9. On infringement of any of the Regulations the whole Tickets will be forfeited, and the party infringing will be liable to be prosecuted under the Company's Byelaws, &c.

Fig.11-4. Rules for the issue of Peebles Railway Special Return tickets.





Fig.11-5. The Tontine Hotel in Peebles High Street.<sup>66</sup>



Fig.11-6. Tweedbridge and the new Peebles Parish church built in 1887.

<sup>66</sup> Built in 1808, according to William Chambers the Tontine Hotel was the only noteworthy new building erected in Peebles during the first half of the nineteenth century. (Both photographs by the author.)



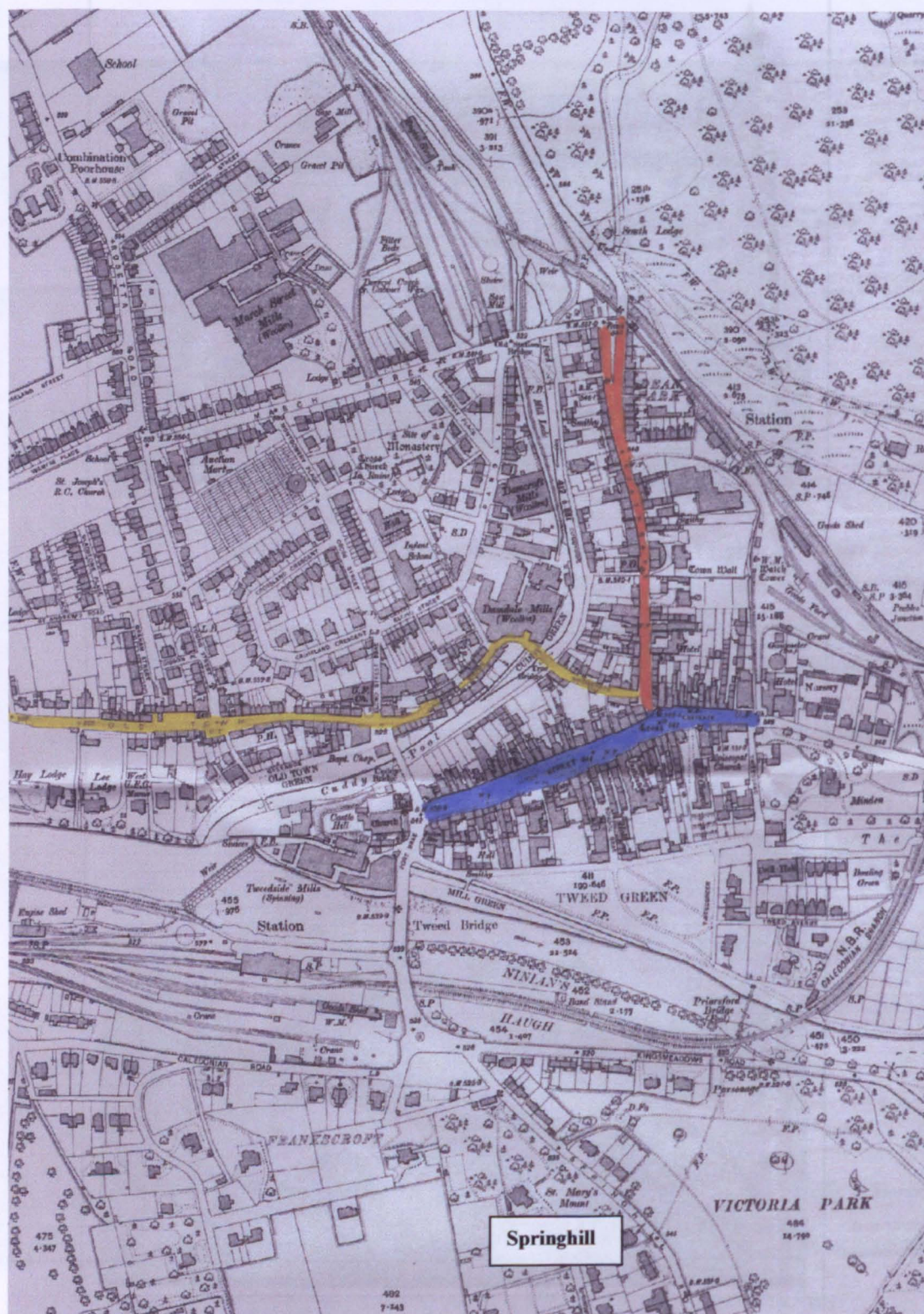


Fig.11-7. Peebles in 1906, showing Springhill suburb.<sup>67</sup>

Scale 10 inches = 1 mile

<sup>67</sup> This section from the 1906 Ordnance Survey map shows the great expansion of Peebles since the arrival of the railways. The original thoroughfares are coloured for comparison with Fig.2-2 (p.36).



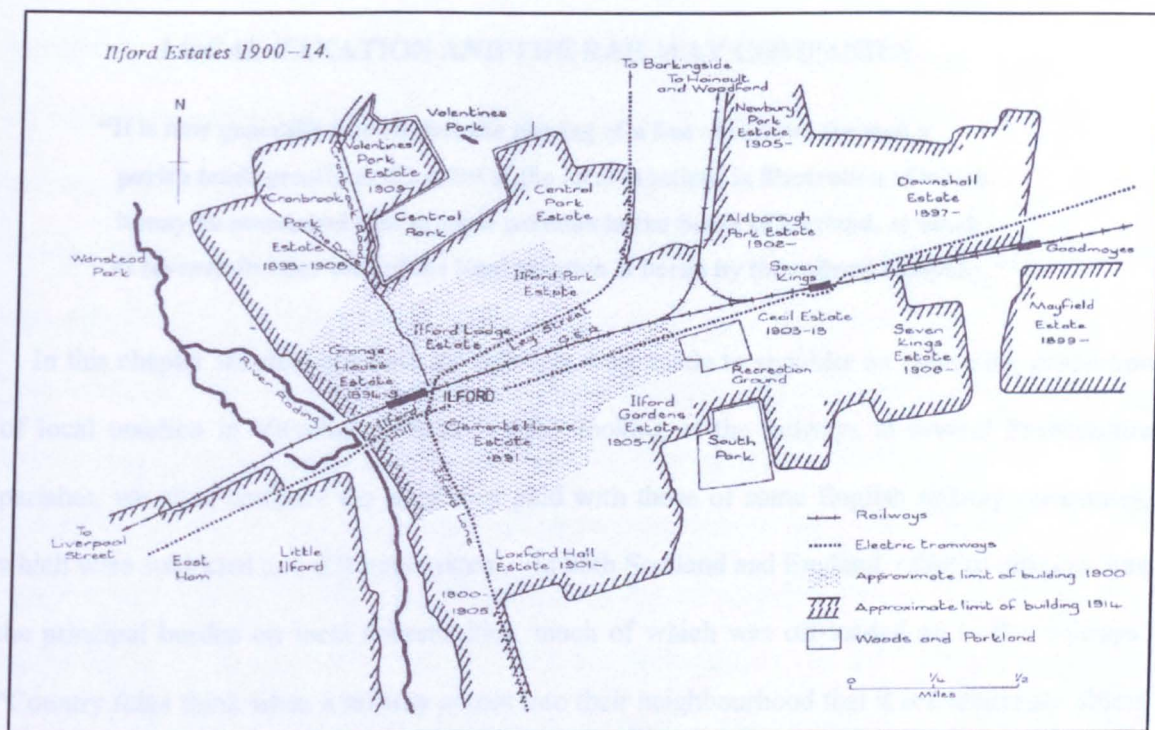


Fig.11-8. The housing estates of Ilford: 1900-14.

## The Corbett Estates

### GOODMAYES, ILFORD.

Office Opposite the Station.

HOUSES with 25 feet frontage, of an entirely new design, with tiled roofs, containing Drawing Room (with folding doors opening on Hall), Dining Room, Scullery-Kitchen, Three Bedrooms, large Cupboard on landing, Bathroom, and W.C. in separate apartments. For sale on 999 years lease or freehold.

**Price £230; Ground-rent £5 : 0 : 0. End Houses, price £238; Ground-rent £5 : 8 : 0.**

Fig.11-9. Corbett advertisement for houses on the Mayfield Estate, Goodmayes.<sup>68</sup>

<sup>68</sup> Both illustrations taken from Jackson's *Semi-Detached London*, *op.cit.*, (ref.56) pp 38 and 2.





## LOCAL TAXATION AND THE RAILWAY COMPANIES

**“It is now generally known that the passing of a line of railway through a parish tends greatly to the relief of the local taxation; in illustration of which it may be mentioned that in some parishes in the South of England, as much as seventy-five per cent of the local taxation is borne by the railway company.”<sup>1</sup>**

In this chapter we shall see how the railways were made to shoulder an increasing proportion of local taxation in Victorian Britain. After looking at the railways in several Peeblesshire parishes, we shall compare the rates they paid with those of some English railway companies, which were subjected to a different system. In both Scotland and England, relief of the poor was the principal burden on local communities, much of which was off-loaded on to the railways. “Country folks think when a railway comes into their neighbourhood that it is a legitimate object of plunder, and the more they can lay on the railway the better. Some of them go so far as to imagine that a railway ought to bear the whole burthens of the parish.”<sup>2</sup>

From the Scottish Reformation of the sixteenth century until 1845, responsibility for the poor lay with the heritors and kirk sessions of Church of Scotland parishes. The Disruption of 1843—which saw a large number of ministers opposed to patronage breaking away to form the Free Church of Scotland—obliged Parliament to set up a Royal Commission to look for an alternative system. The result was embodied in the Poor Law Amendment (Scotland) Act of 1845 (8 & 9 Vict. c.83), which established a Parochial Board in every parish in Scotland to look after the poor. These boards were responsible to a central Board of Supervision in Edinburgh. If parochial boards so desired, the Act allowed them to raise funds by assessments on land and property, to be levied half on owners and half on tenants or occupiers. Since the statute also authorised them to assess railways and canals, any parish containing a railway stood to benefit by imposing a local poor rate.

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<sup>1</sup> *Railway News*, 2/1/1864, p.5. The article stated that in the United Kingdom, the most recent figures showed that £596,410, or 4¼ per cent of the gross traffic receipts, had been paid out in local rates and taxes.

<sup>2</sup> *Herapath's Railway Journal*, (*Herapath*) 3/2/1844, p.114.

Section XLV of the Poor Law Act laid down the important principle that canals and railways should be taxed on the 'mileage' basis.<sup>3</sup> Thus, a total value and a total mileage were to be calculated for every Scottish railway company, with each parish receiving a sum through the rates in proportion to the length of railway line it contained. In England, the 'parochial' principle prevailed, where each parish separately imposed its own (often-extortionate) valuation on the portion of railway passing through its territory. As we shall see later, English railway companies were rarely successful in appealing against these valuations at Quarter Sessions or the Queen's Bench. The problem in Scotland was that the Act did not lay down how a railway was to be valued. However, this was to some extent rectified by the 1854 Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Act (17 & 18 Vict. c.91), which provided a uniform valuation system of lands and heritages for the whole of Scotland, and which made specific provision for railways and canals.

By this Act, the Commissioners of Supply in counties, the magistrates in burghs and parochial boards in rural parishes retained responsibility for most property valuations made for rating purposes. The exception was that the Treasury appointed an independent Assessor to value railways and canals in Scotland, with the salaries of himself and his staff being paid for *pro rata* by the companies. The Act did not specify exactly how the valuation was to be done, but it did spell out how to calculate the annual value of railway stations, sidings, offices, workshops, wharves, docks and houses, including the land on which these were situated. William Munro, the Railway Assessor appointed in 1880, tells us how he and his predecessor, Mr G. Dods, interpreted the Act.<sup>4</sup>

First, the Assessor arrived at the *cumulo* value of a railway company by taking its published gross revenue for the preceding year, and subtracting a number of allowances. The principal

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<sup>3</sup> "And be it enacted, that in Cases where any Canal or Railway shall pass through or be situate in more than One Parish or Combination, the Proportion of the annual Value thereof on which such Assessment shall be made for each such Parish or Combination shall be according to the Number of Miles or Distance which such Canal or Railway passes through or is situated in each Parish or Combination in proportion to the whole Length."

deductions were 'Working Expenses', amounting to half the actual cost of maintaining or repairing the permanent way, and 'Tenant's Allowances', comprising a quarter of the estimated present value of the working stock and plant. He then added up the replacement costs of all the company's stations, sidings and other property, and subtracted 5 per cent of this total (3 per cent before 1867) from the *cumulo* value already calculated. The balance was divided by the total lineal mileage of the company, to produce a value per mile of track. The mileage principle therefore gave a valuation for each parish directly dependent upon the length of railway line within its bounds. To this value was added 5 per cent (3 per cent before 1867) of the current replacement cost of any station or other major railway property located in the parish. Thus, the possession of a station, sidings or other railway assets would boost the parish valuation. These complex calculations were made every year, as fluctuations in railway company revenues, working expenses, or in changing land values, would have an effect upon the valuations.<sup>5</sup>

There was an element of unfairness in this system, since a parish on a single-track branch line with few trains daily received the same uniform rate per mile as other parishes situated on busy multi-track, main line routes. Over the years, the Lord Ordinary on the Bills<sup>6</sup> in the Edinburgh Court of Session heard a number of 'unfair' appeals by parishes situated on trunk lines. According to Munro, none were successful.

So, how did the Poor Law and Land Valuation Acts affect Peeblesshire and its railways? In the first place, it meant that the railways paid local taxes to three separate bodies; the County, the Burgh and the Parochial Boards. We do not know precisely what the Parish of Peebles received from the railways in local taxes, as the Minute Books of the Peebles Railway Company (PRC)

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<sup>4</sup> W. Munro, *The Valuation of Property* (Edinburgh, 2nd edn. 1890) pp.21-4.

<sup>5</sup> This is a simplified explanation of the appointment and functions of the Railway Assessor. Full details are contained in Sections XX-XXIX of the 1854 Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Act.

<sup>6</sup> The Lord Ordinary on the Bills, the junior judge of the Court of Session, dealt with all railway and canal appeals and disputes (Sect XXIV of the 1854 Act). We saw that the Lord Ordinary was involved in the argument between the Town Council and the NBR over the re-alignment of Tweed Bridge (Chapter 7).

only give this information for certain years (Table 12-6 below). The 'Revenue' total in the annual accounts of the Burgh (found in the Town Council Minute Books) was not broken down, and the Parochial Board Minute Books have not survived to reveal the annual poor rates. However, for several years the Burgh was paid an additional £70 a year by the Railway Company, to compensate for lost customs tolls, and it received dividends on its 50 PRC shares. The North British (NBR) and Caledonian Railways (CR) did not break down their local tax payments to parish level, and their Minute Books only show total figures covering the whole of their networks.

The Commissioners of Supply—who were landowners of estates with a minimum value of £100 per annum and who ran the counties before the establishment of county councils—imposed a county assessment. This covered, *inter alia*, the upkeep of prisons and asylums, the maintenance of police and local militia, and the registration of county voters. In Peeblesshire the assessment varied between about 1½d and 3½d in the £,<sup>7</sup> and was levied on the landowners and occupiers which, of course, included the PR, NBR and CR. The financial effect of the county rate on the railway companies in Peeblesshire from 1867 to 1877 is shown in Table 12-1. Because of the 1861 leasing arrangement (Chapter 4), I have combined the PR and NBR figures in the following tables and graphs. The total payment of £2,254 by the railways was of significant help to the Commissioners of Supply in their financial management of Peeblesshire, and they also benefited in their private capacity as landowners, since the contribution from the railways reduced their own tax burdens. Because an independent Assessor had made the valuations, Scottish landowners were not open to charges of self-aggrandisement as were their opposite numbers in England.

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<sup>7</sup> The county rate was obtained from the Commissioners of Supply Sederunt Books (SBA P/CS/1/7 & 8) held in the Scottish Borders Council Archives in Selkirk.

On top of the county rates, there was a separate assessment from each parish that had a railway line passing through it.<sup>8</sup> Over time, the parochial boards took on responsibilities in addition to the operation of the Poor Law. These included the registration of births, deaths and marriages, the provision of rudimentary public health services, and, after the 1872 Education Act, the establishment of primary schools. Taking the same 10-year period as in Table 12-1,<sup>9</sup> we shall also consider the two Peeblesshire parishes where the Parochial Board Minute Books have survived, and whose rates varied between about 6d and 10d in the £ (Tables 12-3 and 12-4).

Year	Rate per £	PR/NBR Valuations	CR Valuation	PR/NBR Payments	CR Payment	Total Payment by Railways
1867-68	1.75d	£6,302	£15,120	£46	£110	£156
1868-69	1.625d	£6,934	£12,362	£47	£84	£131
1869-70	2.875d	£7,849	£11,813	£94	£142	£236
1870-71	2.5d	£8,892	£12,514	£93	£130	£223
1871-72	2.5d	£8,397	£11,019	£87	£115	£202
1872-73	3.25d	£10,061	£13,271	£136	£178	£314
1873-74	2.25d	£10,195	£10,786	£96	£112	£208
1874-75	2.75d	£10,019	£10,033	£115	£115	£230
1875-76	2.33d	£11,333	£10,067	£110	£98	£208
1876-77	2.66d	£16,320	£14,878	<u>£181</u>	<u>£165</u>	<u>£346</u>
<b>TOTALS</b>				<b>£1,005</b>	<b>£1,249</b>	<b>£2,254</b>

Note: Figures are rounded off to the nearest £.

Table 12-1. Peeblesshire county assessments and railway payments over 10 years.

But first, we will compare the parishes of Stobo and Eddleston in some detail, to see how the Railway Assessor dealt with them. As we saw in Chapter 8, the CR stations were usually built to a higher standard than those of the NBR. The fact that they cost more than those of the PR

<sup>8</sup> These were Broughton, Eddleston, Innerleithen, Newlands, Peebles, Stobo, Traquair and West Linton.

<sup>9</sup> This decade was chosen to allow a direct comparison of statistics from the three primary source books (Commissioners of Supply and two parochial boards), which had different start and finish dates.

and NBR (Table 12-2) was one of the reasons why the Assessor came down more heavily on the Caledonian. According to the 1854 Valuation of Lands Act, he was obliged to add a percentage of the current replacement value of railway property on top of the parish assessments already calculated on the mileage principle. Nevertheless, as we shall see later in this chapter, the CR assessments of Mr Dods did not always follow the laid down rules.

STATION	COST £
<b>Peebles and North British Railways</b>	
Peebles (PR)	3,500
Peebles (NBR)	2,200
Eddleston	500
Cardrona	300
Innerleithen	2,000
Walkerburn	1,500
Lamancha	300
Macbie Hill	300
Broomlee (West Linton)	500
Dolphinton	200
TOTAL	£11,300
<b>Caledonian Railway</b>	
Peebles	7,700
Lyne	1,800
Stobo	2,000
Broughton	1,200
Dolphinton	2,700
TOTAL	£15,400

Table 12-2. Comparative costs of Peeblesshire railway stations.<sup>10</sup>

The CR Directors were unhappy with the level of their assessments in Scotland, but “repeated attempts in Parliament to obtain amendment of the oppressive provisions of the Valuations Act have hitherto proved unsuccessful.”<sup>11</sup> These attempts partly explained why “the Parliamentary expenses of last Session were unusually large,” and an effort was made to reduce them. “By agreement with the North British Company, the field of Parliamentary contest in the present

<sup>10</sup> These original station costs are taken from Munro’s 1880-81 Peeblesshire valuations. I do not have a figure for Leadburn station, which was situated just inside the county of Midlothian.

<sup>11</sup> CR Minute Book—Directors’ Report for half year to January 1867 (NAS BR/CAL/1/2).

Session has been greatly narrowed.” We saw earlier that such agreement was highly unusual, and may well have marked the start of the move towards the proposed amalgamation.

The bar graphs in Fig.12-1 show the Railway Assessor’s valuations for the similar agricultural Parishes of Stobo (CR) and Eddleston (PR/NBR),<sup>12</sup> not only in money value but also as percentages of the total parish rateable values. We shall use percentages later when comparing Peeblesshire with the situation in England. Stobo and Eddleston each had almost seven miles of single-line track, with one station. However, the Stobo station cost four times that of Eddleston, and the graphs highlight this as well as the effect of the differing levels of railway company revenues.<sup>13</sup>

As can be seen in the first graph, the CR paid a higher percentage of the parish rates. Over the years from 1867 to 1876, it was assessed at between about 49 per cent and 60 per cent of the total valuation of Stobo Parish, while the PR/NBR in Eddleston saw a maximum of about 28 per cent. The second graph shows the actual money valuations in the two parishes. The NBR went through a financial crisis in the mid-1860s, which accounts for the relatively-low assessments between 1867 and 1875. We have already seen that the CR was not in much better shape, but its Stobo assessment does not reflect this. The significant rise in valuations for both parishes in 1876-77 is the result of a sudden jump in revenues for the two companies. From then until 1891—the end of the period covered in this thesis—the NBR continued to see sustained improvement, which resulted in further increases in the Eddleston valuations. On the other hand, the CR revenues rose more slowly, so that by 1891 the actual CR contribution to Stobo in money terms might well have been similar to that of the NBR to Eddleston. Unfortunately, we

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<sup>12</sup> Although the PRC actually paid the Eddleston rates until 1876, the assessments were based on the data supplied by the NBR.

<sup>13</sup> These graphs were produced from statistics contained in the Peeblesshire Valuation Rolls of the Commissioners of Supply. (SBA/P/CS/1/16-36).

cannot verify this since the records for these parishes have not survived, and thus we do not know whether they set similar poundages when making their rates assessments.

However, parochial board records are available for two other mainly agricultural parishes, Newlands and West Linton, and they illustrate a significant difference in the way they dealt with railway taxation. The difference was that Newlands allowed the NBR a discount of 25 per cent on the Railway Assessor's valuation, whereas West Linton required payment in full. By using the parish poundage rates in conjunction with the valuations, we can see exactly how much the railways contributed to these parishes by way of taxation. Note that Newlands had only short stretches of railway (parts of the Leadburn-Peebles and Leadburn-Dolphinton lines), and only one station, Lamancha, while West Linton Parish not only had the benefit of a greater track mileage but also four stations, Macbie Hill, Broomlee (for West Linton) and two in Dolphinton.

Table 12-3 has been compiled from information in the Minute Book of the Newlands Parochial Board and the Railway Assessor's valuations over the 10-year period as in Table 12-1. At their statutory half-yearly meetings, the Newlands Board members estimated the income required to meet their commitments over the coming six months. The annual budget did not vary much, except that the low 1869-70 total reflects an underspend in the previous year. The effect of the 1872 Education Act on parish finances is clearly seen in the budget estimates, while the Railway Assessor's valuation also grew significantly in the 10-year period.

There remains the question as to why Newlands allowed the NBR a 25 per cent deduction on the valuation from 1868 onwards. The Poor Law Amendment Act of 1845 laid down rules for parochial boards when making their annual valuation of lands and heritages. Section XXXVII stated that the valuation should be taken as the rent at which the properties might "be reasonably expected to let from Year to Year, under Deduction of the probable average Cost of the Repairs, Insurance and other Expences, [*sic*] if any, necessary to maintain such Lands and Heritages in



their actual state, and all Rates, Taxes, and public Charges payable in respect of the same.” It was this section which prompted the NBR to claim a deduction from parish assessments.

Section XXXVII of the Poor Law Amendment Act was not specifically revoked by the 1854 Valuation of Lands Act, although, as we have already seen, the valuation of railway property was no longer the responsibility of the parochial boards. So, were the Section XXXVII deductions claimed by the NBR still in force? Under the headings of ‘Working Expenses’ and ‘Tenant’s Allowance’, the Railway Assessor in calculating his *cumulo* figure was already making a deduction from gross annual railway revenues under the Valuation of Lands Act.

Year	Rate per £	Budget for Year	PR/NBR Valuation	PR/NBR Payment
1867-68	9½d	£367	£585	£21
1868-69	9½d	£352	£497	£20
1869-70	6½d	£257	£599	£16
1870-71	8d	£340	£701	£23
1871-72	8d	£364	£640	£21
1872-73	7d	£313	£825	£24
1873-74	6½d	£469	£841	£23
1874-75	9½d	£456	£806	£32
1875-76	8d	£478	£953	£32
1876-77	10d	£487	£1316	<u>£55</u>
				<b>TOTAL £267</b>
Note: Figures are rounded off to the nearest £.				

Table 12-3. Parish of Newlands: railway income over 10 years.<sup>14</sup>

Unhappy with a situation where the NBR seemed to be claiming the same allowance twice, once from the Assessor and once from the parish, the Parochial Board of Kinglassie in Fife wrote a circular letter on 27 November 1874 to all parishes within the NBR network. It suggested that they each contribute a small sum into a fund guaranteeing the legal costs of a court action to

<sup>14</sup> These were the payments after the deduction of 25% claimed by the NBR.

settle the question of the NBR claims for parish deductions. This letter was discussed at a special meeting of Newlands Parochial Board, when it was agreed to contribute five shillings per £100 of the Parish gross valuation to this fund, "provided that not fewer than 150 parishes join in."<sup>15</sup> Newlands continued to allow the 25 per cent discount in subsequent years, so presumably there were insufficient parishes willing to agree. Since the Fife Council Archives Centre in Markinch has no record of the whereabouts of the Kinglassie Parochial Board Minute Book, I have not been able to confirm this. On the other hand, West Linton refused to allow a discount, and its income from the railways for the ten-year period is shown in Table 12-4.

Year	Rate per £	Budget	NBR Valuation	CR Valuation	NBR Payment	CR Payment	Total Payment by Railways
1867-68	9½d	£418	£1265	£886	£50	£35	£85
1868-69	9½d	£499	£1430	£787	£60	£31	£91
1869-70	6½d	£449	£1720	£758	£47	£21	£68
1870-71	8d	£489	£2010	£796	£67	£27	£94
1871-72	8d	£486	£1812	£714	£60	£24	£84
1872-73	7d	£534	£2250 est. <sup>16</sup>	£713 est.	£66 est.	£21 est.	£87 est.
1873-74	6½d	£536	£2407	£712	£65	£19	£84
1874-75	9½d	£519	£2310	£660	£127	£26	£153
1875-76	8d	£508	£2728	£662	£91	£22	£113
1876-77	10d	£425	£3695	£926	<u>£154</u>	<u>£39</u>	<u>£193</u>
<b>TOTALS</b>					<b>£787</b>	<b>£265</b>	<b>£1052</b>

Note: Figures are rounded off to the nearest £.

Table 12-4. Parish of West Linton: railway income over 10 years.

In 1871, the population of West Linton was 1,387, compared to 851 in Newlands. West Linton had no industries except agriculture and quarrying, but it had four railway stations as opposed to only one in Newlands. Tables 12-3 and 12-4 show that it received almost four times as much railway income as did Newlands, although the parish map of Peeblesshire (see Fig.12-2)

<sup>15</sup> Newlands Parochial Board Minute Book, 19/12/1874.

shows that it had only about twice the track mileage. The difference was due to two main components—the presence of the four stations, and the West Linton Parochial Board's refusal to allow the NBR any deduction from the Railway Assessor's valuation.<sup>17</sup> I suspect that their refusal was due to John Forrester WS, JP,<sup>18</sup> a member of the Board. He was a local landowner and a Writer to the Signet, the senior society of solicitors in Scotland. Thus, when the West Linton Board considered the circular letter from Kinglassie, they concluded that "as this Board had no cause of complaint upon this point, it was agreed to take no notice of the matter."<sup>19</sup> The NBR Board presumably backed down in the face of the West Linton refusal because they did not want to risk losing a court action that might have cost them the deductions they were already receiving from other parishes.

With regard to the other parishes traversed by the PR, there is information to be found for some of the years between 1861 and 1876 in the PRC Minute Books and the six-monthly Reports and Accounts.<sup>20</sup> These not only cover Peebles, Eddleston and Newlands, but also the four Midlothian parishes. Figures for Stobo are not available, for as already stated, the CR aggregated their poor rate payments into one grand total.

If we turn to the actual rate bills levied on the PRC, by the terms of the leasing agreement with the NBR (Chapter 4) it fell to the PRC to pay the local rates and Government taxes (income tax and passenger duty). The total figures for the decade 1867-76 are shown in Table 12-5. Of course, how these totals were made up varied from year to year, with the alterations in the assessments from Mr Dods, the changes in the poundage for income tax and local rates, and the number of first- and second-class passengers carried, for whom passenger duty was payable. Because there is inconsistency in the recording of payments in the PRC Minute Books, it is not

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<sup>16</sup> Estimate. Railway valuation figures for 1872-3 are missing from the Peeblesshire Valuation Roll.

<sup>17</sup> West Linton Parochial Board Minute Book, 4/8/1868.

<sup>18</sup> Forrester is shown as a Writer to the Signet and a Justice of the Peace in the Parochial Board minutes.

<sup>19</sup> West Linton, *op.cit.*, (ref.17) 2/2/1875.

<sup>20</sup> The PRC Reports & Accounts were regularly published in the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*.

YEAR	1867	1868	1869	1870	1871	1872	1873	1874	1875	1876
PAID (£)	417	424	448	467	484	485	474	535	615	633
Grand Total £4,982										

Table 12-5. PRC total rates and passenger tax payments 1867-76.

possible in every year to pick out what the PRC paid to an individual parish or to the counties. However, I did find complete records of parish payments for the years 1866, 1868 and 1872. The four Midlothian parishes—Penicuik, Lasswade, Cockpen and Dalkeith—shown in Fig.12-3, are included with the three from Peeblesshire in Table 12-6.

PAID TO:-	1866	1868	1872
Peebles	£24 6s 9d	£19 10s 4d	£28 6s 6d
Eddleston	44 16s 5d	34 5s 2d	51 7s 8d
Newlands	10s 0d	6s 6d	8s 0d
Penicuik	20 13s 8d	48 7s 11d	27 3s 9d
Lasswade	67 19s 0d	109 1s 1d	58 3s 3d
Cockpen	20 9s 6d	17 13s 3d	48 3s 9d
Dalkeith	1 17s 2d	1 15s 2d	4 8s 9d
Peebles County	84 16s 1d	68 6s 4d	132 11s 2d
Midlothian County	<u>22 9s 5d</u>	<u>20 18s 3d</u>	<u>33 12s 3d</u>
TOTALS	£287 18s 0d	£320 6s 0d	£384 5s 1d

Table 12-6. Parish and county local rates paid by the PRC.

Parish rates were a considerable burden on a small railway company, whose directors probably wondered why they were expected to pay disproportionate amounts towards the upkeep of the poor, the education of the local children and the lighting of the local streets. "Railways are burdened with rates for services from which they derive no benefit- e.g. School board rate, sanitary rate, or police rate. A railway track having no occupants cannot need a schoolmaster or

a lamplighter.”<sup>21</sup> Government legislation also meant that railway companies were not allowed to take advantage of the rise in land values in the various parishes, once they had begun operations. Neither were they allowed to develop land that had been acquired by compulsory purchase: if it became surplus to requirements, it had to be returned to the original owners.

### **English Parishes and the Railways**

Let us now look at the situation in England regarding parishes and the railway companies.<sup>22</sup> From the start of the seventeenth century, ‘Relief of the Poor’ was the principal statutory burden on parish finances in England,<sup>23</sup> and its assessment was based on the value of land and houses. The Industrial Revolution and the arrival of canals and railways therefore posed problems for parish assessors, who, especially after the defeat of Napoleon in 1815, were faced with a rising population and increasing numbers of paupers. There was a lack of consistency and much unfairness in the way parishes dealt with poor relief, so that Parliament finally intervened in 1836 by passing the Parochial Relief Assessment Act (6 & 7 Will. IV, c.96). There was now a uniform method of rating property in England, but it was still firmly rooted in the parish. Valuation for Poor Law assessment was based on the annual rent at which a property might be expected to be let, minus the expenses for its upkeep. As we have seen, the same principle was later used in Section XXXVII of the 1845 Scottish Act. What was missing from the English Act was any mention of railways or how local authorities should assess them.

Thus, faced by the spiralling cost of maintaining the poor, from the 1840s onwards parish vestries were unwilling to increase taxes on local ratepayers if they could pass the burden on to the railways. They saw that these companies were virtual monopolies, often controlled by outsiders in relatively remote cities, and they also remembered that before obtaining their Acts of

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<sup>21</sup> *Railway Times*, 11/11/1876, p.1016.

<sup>22</sup> See R.W. Kostal, *The Law and English Railway Capitalism: 1825-75* (Oxford, 1994) pp.222-253.

In this chapter I am greatly indebted to Professor Kostal’s commentary on local taxation.

<sup>23</sup> Poor Relief Act of 1601 (43 Eliz. c.2.). (Quoted by Kostal).

Parliament, many railway promoters had overcome local opposition by promises of substantial contributions in the form of rates. Again, the published profits of the Liverpool and Manchester and other railways fostered an impression that all lines were prosperous. And so, parish overseers began to increase the size and the proportion of parochial taxes payable by the railways within their jurisdictions, basing their valuations not only on the land occupied but also on what they considered should be their share of railway profits.

The railways soon found that appeals to Quarter Sessions against excessive increases in local taxation were usually in vain. The Magistrates on the Bench were the very people who had agreed the assessments in the first place, and who had a vested interest in keeping their own taxes down. Magistrates also had the absolute power of deciding all questions of facts and of figures, and were not bound by any precedents.<sup>24</sup> Although the LNWR, the largest railway in Britain, began 300 appeals to Quarter Sessions between 1847 and 1850, only 62 went to trial. According to Edward Watkin, Secretary of the LNWR, at least £30,000 a year was being expended by the companies and the parishes in litigating questions concerning the assessment of railways.<sup>25</sup>

The alternative was an appeal to the Queen's Bench in London, where the law had been settled as the result of several judgements (*R. v. Miller*, Cowp. 619; *R. v. Hogg*, 1TR 721; *R. v. Guest*, 7 Ad. & E. 951). "If personal property, which would not be itself the subject of rate, such as machinery is affixed or annexed to real property, whereby the occupation of the latter, with the adjuncts, is rendered more valuable, it will properly be rated at the increased value."<sup>26</sup> But how was this increased value to be determined? In spite of the fact that the judges had some sympathy towards the railways, three crucial appeals were decided in favour of the parishes.<sup>27</sup>

<sup>24</sup> Kostal, *op. cit.*, (ref 22) p.235.

<sup>25</sup> P.P. Vol.XV, 1850, Edward Watkin, Q.541, p.100.

<sup>26</sup> H.J. Hodgson, (Barrister-at-Law), *A Summary of the Law as applied to the rating of railways and other undertakings* (London, 1851) p.3.

<sup>27</sup> Kostal, *op. cit.*, (ref 22) pp. 237-47. 1. *Mitcheldever R. v. LSWR* (1842) 1 QB 558, 564

2. *Tilehurst 2 R. v. GWR* (1851) 15 QB 379, 397

3. *Running Powers R. v. LBSCR* (1851) 20 LJMC 124 (QB)

The most important of these was the ‘Mitcheldever Case’, where Lord Chief Justice Denman confirmed that the Parish Overseer was correct when he took the profits of the London & South Western Railway into account in making his calculations. (In Scotland, the Railway Assessor based his calculations on revenues rather than profits.) One barrister asserted that the effect of Mitcheldever was to “convert the poor rate into an income tax,”<sup>28</sup> in contradiction to the legal position since 1601. The *Railway Times* said that it “left the railway interest entirely at the mercy of local magnates.”<sup>29</sup> Lord Chief Justice Campbell decided ‘Tilehurst 2’ on the basis of the mileage principle. Branch lines should be valued as part of a complete railway system, rather than as distinct local entities that might not be profitable in their own right. Mr Justice Coleridge heard three ‘Running Powers’ cases—reported together in 20 LJMC 124 (QB)—which concerned the problem of how parishes were to value railways in a situation where a company granted running powers over its rails to another company. In the absence of agreement between the parish and the companies, Coleridge ruled that despite its imperfections “the parochial and not the mileage principle, governed local rates assessments in England.”<sup>30</sup> The judges were bound to administer the flawed provisions of the 1836 Parochial Relief Assessment Act as they stood, for, as Mr Justice Coleridge stated, “A Court of Law has no choice but to apply the legislation as written.” Only Parliament could amend imperfect laws.

The parish overseers took full advantage of these apparently contradictory but favourable legal decisions. Since they had been frustrated in the courts, the larger railway companies went back to negotiating directly with each parish, employing teams of lawyers, accountants and land valuers to obtain the best deals they could get. The outcome of such negotiations produced two different types of valuation. Parishes situated on prosperous trunk lines stuck to the parochial principle in estimating the value to the railway of their portions of track. On the other hand, parishes on branch lines took advantage of the mileage principle.

<sup>28</sup> A. Mills, *The Law of Rating, Considered with Especial Reference to Railways* (London, 1850) p.5.

<sup>29</sup> *Railway Times*, 20/7/1850. (Quoted by Kostal).

<sup>30</sup> Kostal, *op.cit.*, (ref.22) p.244.

We can now compare the proportion of local taxation paid by the railways in Peeblesshire with that of parishes in rural England. The County Valuation Rolls over the ten-year period between 1867 and 1876 show that in the seven railway parishes of Peeblesshire,<sup>31</sup> on average, about 77 per cent of the total assessments were apportioned to landowners and 23 per cent to the railways. Table 12-7 shows the actual figures at the beginning and end of the decade, and also reveals that the great percentage variations between parishes remained. Taking the 25 per cent reduction

Parish	1867				Parish Valuation	Total Valuation	Railway %age
	Caledonian	PRC	NBR	Railway Valuation			
Eddleston	---	£1,561	£158	£1,719	£8,984	£10,703	16.1
Innerleithen	---	---	£803	£803	£11,765	£12,568	6.4
Broughton	£3,146	---	---	£3,146	£8,454	£11,600	27.1
West Linton	£ 886	---	£1,265	£2,151	£11,114	£13,265	16.2
Newlands	---	£14	£585	£599	£9,362	£9,961	6.0
Peebles (Landward)	£2,932	£ 646	408	£3,986	£10,253	£14,239	28.0
Stobo	£7,189	---	---	£7,189	£4,820	£12,009	59.9
Traquair	---	---	£865	£865	£6,814	£7,679	11.3
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£14,153</b>	<b>£2,221</b>	<b>£4,082</b>	<b>£20,458</b>	<b>£71,566</b>	<b>£92,024</b>	<b>22.0</b>

Parish	1876				Parish Valuation	Total Valuation	Railway %age
	Caledonian	NBR		Railway Valuation			
Eddleston	---	£3,836		£3,836	£9,910	£13,746	27.9
Innerleithen	---	£2,207		£2,207	£15,829	£18,036	12.2
Broughton	£3,309	---	---	£3,309	£9,807	£13,116	25.2
West Linton	£ 926	£3,695		£4,621	£12,487	£17,108	27.0
Newlands	---	£1,754		£1,754	£10,746	£12,500	14.0
Peebles (Landward)	£3,084	£2,413		£5,497	£12,031	£17,528	31.4
Stobo	£7,559	---		£7,559	£5,247	£12,806	59.0
Traquair	---	£2,415		£2,145	£7,723	£10,138	23.8
<b>Totals</b>	<b>£14,878</b>	<b>£16,320</b>		<b>£31,198</b>	<b>£83,775</b>	<b>£114,973</b>	<b>27.1*</b>

\* According to the Valuation Rolls, this is the highest percentage of any year between 1867 and 1891.

Table 12-7. Peeblesshire County Valuation Rolls for 1867 and 1876.

<sup>31</sup> Only four parishes were without a railway: Drumelzier, Kirkurd, Lyne and Tweedsmuir.



allowed by Newlands—and probably by some of the other parishes—then the railways paid just over a fifth of the rates in those parishes where they operated. Although this fifth weighed quite heavily on railway profits, the position was worse in England, and with the sole exception of Stobo, Peeblesshire parishes fared better than most of their English counterparts.

In many rural parishes the English railways were paying half or more of the total assessment. Indeed, in the south of England Parish of Coulsdon that consisted of 4,200 acres, the 53-acre stretch of railway land was burdened with three-quarters of the total rates.<sup>32</sup> According to the *Railway Gazette* on 13 July 1850, the Eastern Counties Railway paid 33 per cent of its 1849 dividend fund in parochial taxes. London & North Western (LNWR) and the London Brighton & South Coast Railways were also assessed at a full third of the total rateable value of the parishes covered by their networks.<sup>33</sup> In 1863, the LNWR paid about £72 per mile per annum in rates and taxes, and the situation with the South Eastern Railway was even worse.<sup>34</sup> According to the PRC Minute Book, the equivalent figure for the PRC in 1863 was only £18 per mile per annum.

The parochial Poor Rate was an area of legislation in England that became closely associated with the income tax regulations of the Inland Revenue, and in many cases local income tax assessments were used for the administration of the Poor Law in parishes. “An Act of 1860 which transferred the assessment of railway companies from local commissioners to government officials was a step towards centralisation.”<sup>35</sup> Gladstone’s Income Tax Act of 1860 (23 Vict. c.14) had provided the Inland Revenue with a uniform mechanism for the computation of taxes that could probably have been adapted to assess the English railway companies for parochial rates, but it was never used for this purpose.

<sup>32</sup> P.P. Vol. XVI, 1850, Samuel Laing, Q.350. p.67.

<sup>33</sup> Kostal, *op. cit.*, (ref. 22) p.229.

<sup>34</sup> *Railway Times*, 9/1/1864 (Quoted by Kostal).

<sup>35</sup> R. Colley, ‘Railways and mid-Victorian income tax’ *JTH*, Vol.24, Issue 1, Mar 2003, p.79.

Thus, it would seem that, compared with Scotland, the position of the English railway companies remained inconsistent and unsatisfactory. "Session after Session of Parliament has been suffered to pass without the subject being dealt with in any tangible shape." So wrote an experienced railway arbitrator and assessor in 1856, who advocated a system similar to that recently introduced in Scotland.<sup>36</sup> Despite the fact that by 1865 there were 165 railway directors in the Commons (a quarter of all MPs), and others in the Lords,<sup>37</sup> successive governments failed to remove the anomalies. Although the majority of these MPs sat on the boards of small companies—for example the PRC had two; Montgomery for Peeblesshire and Forbes Mackenzie for Liverpool—they rarely united with the larger companies to persuade the Government to deal with the problem. Yet, in the words of one railway journal, "it has become more manifest, that all the amount of legal ingenuity in the Kingdom, is utterly powerless to calculate the rateable value of a railway under the Law of Elizabeth."<sup>38</sup> Geoffrey Alderman explained why nothing was done to amend this situation.

"Until 1867, the railway interest could hardly be called a united body of men."<sup>39</sup> Apart from the Act of 1844, there was little government regulation of the railways, and the companies were generally content to be left alone. M.P.s like Montgomery, who were directors of branch lines, tended to sit on their boards for local or personal reasons, and had few interests in common with the directors of the large companies. In any case, fierce inter-company rivalry tended to inhibit joint action, while "the interest, politically, straddled both major parties."<sup>40</sup>

Had England had its own Valuation of Lands Act, there would have been an independent and consistent railway valuation system for assessing local taxes. And, for legal consistency, any

<sup>36</sup> W.E. Bott, *Letter to Lord Campbell*. "I propose, first, that the Poor Law Commissioners shall, under the authority of Parliament, appoint an officer whose duty it shall be to assess the true lettable value of each railway in its entirety, and to apportion such lettable value over all the parishes concerned."

<sup>37</sup> J. Simmons, *The Victorian Railway* (London, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1995) p.265.

<sup>38</sup> *Railway Gazette* 15/10/1870. (Quoted by Kostal).

<sup>39</sup> G. Alderman, *The Railway Interest* (Leicester, 1973, re-printed 1993) p.14.

<sup>40</sup> *ibid.*, p.224.

appeals against rating assessments would have been heard by one or more judges, equivalent to the Lord Ordinary on the Bills in Edinburgh. However, such legislation never happened and the English railways were thus denied the benefits of a rational, centralised system of poor relief. The *Railway Record* still complained in 1870 about those bodies “which appear to regard railway revenue as an appropriate object for extortion.”<sup>41</sup> As late as 1890, when comparing the taxation of railways in the two countries, Munro could write that “the English practice still appears to give rise to more uncertainty, more trouble and more inequalities” than the Scottish system.<sup>42</sup> Indeed, the old Poor Law framework in England did not disappear until 1948, with the nationalisation of the railways by the Labour Government.

#### A note on Caledonian Railway Assessments

YEAR	GROSS REVENUE £	PERMANENT WAY ALLOWANCE £	MILES OPEN	PEEBLESSHIRE ASSESSMENTS £
1867-68	1,463,615	74,360	326	15,120
1868-69	1,690,282	90,000 est.	328	12,362
1869-70	1,817,757	95,316	348	11,813
1870-71	1,875,648	105,873	349	12,514
1871-72	1,998,740	108,000	359	11,019
1872-73	2,178,760	104,692	360	13,271
1873-74	2,349,517	124,415	368	10,786
1874-75	2,538,419	154,945	374	10,033
1875-76	2,666,473	139,433	376	10,067
1876-77	2,669,001	134,635	380	14,878

Table 12-8. Caledonian Railway total revenues compared with the assessments in Peeblesshire.<sup>43</sup>

<sup>41</sup> *Railway Record* 5/3/1870. (Quoted by Kostal).

<sup>42</sup> Munro, *op. cit.*, (ref 4) p.203.

<sup>43</sup> The ‘Gross Revenue’, ‘Permanent Way Allowance’ and ‘Miles Open’ figures are from the CR Minute Books. The Assessment column is compiled from Commissioners of Supply records.

It is difficult to see how some of the CR assessments in Peeblesshire made by Mr Dods obeyed the rules laid down for the Railway Assessor. This is especially true for Stobo, where there were no changes in the number of miles of permanent way, sidings or stations, which might have affected the assessments. However, with steadily rising revenues, matched by the increasing replacement costs of railway property, then one would have expected a similar steady increase in the total assessments for the CR Peeblesshire parishes without the large fluctuations that are shown in Table 12-8. The table shows the annual increase in the total Caledonian Railway gross revenues during a time when the Company was slowly expanding the network—from 326 to 380 miles or about 16.5 per cent over the 10 years. However, instead of a corresponding steady rise in the assessments for the parishes in Peeblesshire, they appear to vary in a random fashion. Indeed the highest assessment occurs in 1867-68, which was the year of the lowest revenue.

As we saw earlier, the Railway Assessor had to take into account the cost of repairs to the permanent way. I should have expected the repair costs to rise in step with the increasing track mileage, but, of course, how much was spent per mile of track each year was a CR Board decision. For a number of years they set aside a total of £300 per mile per annum. The sudden rise in the allowance for permanent way repairs from 1873-4 probably indicates that not enough had been allocated in previous years. This increase in permanent way costs may be the reason why the parish assessments fell between 1873-4 and 1875-6, but it is difficult to see why there was such a significant increase for 1876-77.

The other main variable was the 'Tenant's Allowance', which was a quarter of the estimated present value of the working stock and plant. But this too should have been a steadily rising figure as the numbers of locomotives, carriages and wagons grew, and this allowance should not have been responsible for the large fluctuations in the assessments. It is surprising that the Caledonian Board do not seem to have challenged Mr Dods to explain how he arrived at his

assessments for the various counties and parishes in Scotland where the CR operated. Instead, they seem to have been content to put pressure on Parliament in an attempt to amend the 1854 Valuation of Lands Act.

Having made comparisons between two different taxation systems and the effects of local taxation on the railways, the next chapter will compare the social and economic effects of the railways on Peebles with those on Duns, a similar town in the Scottish Borders.

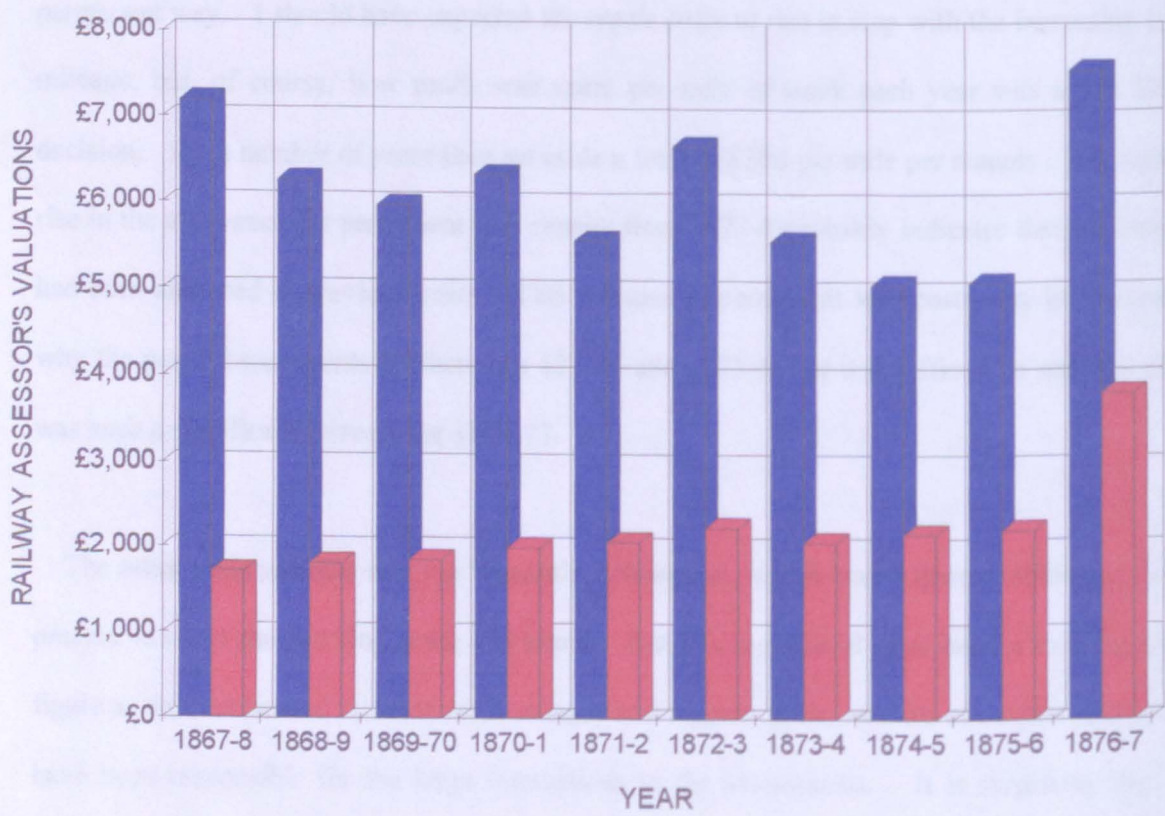
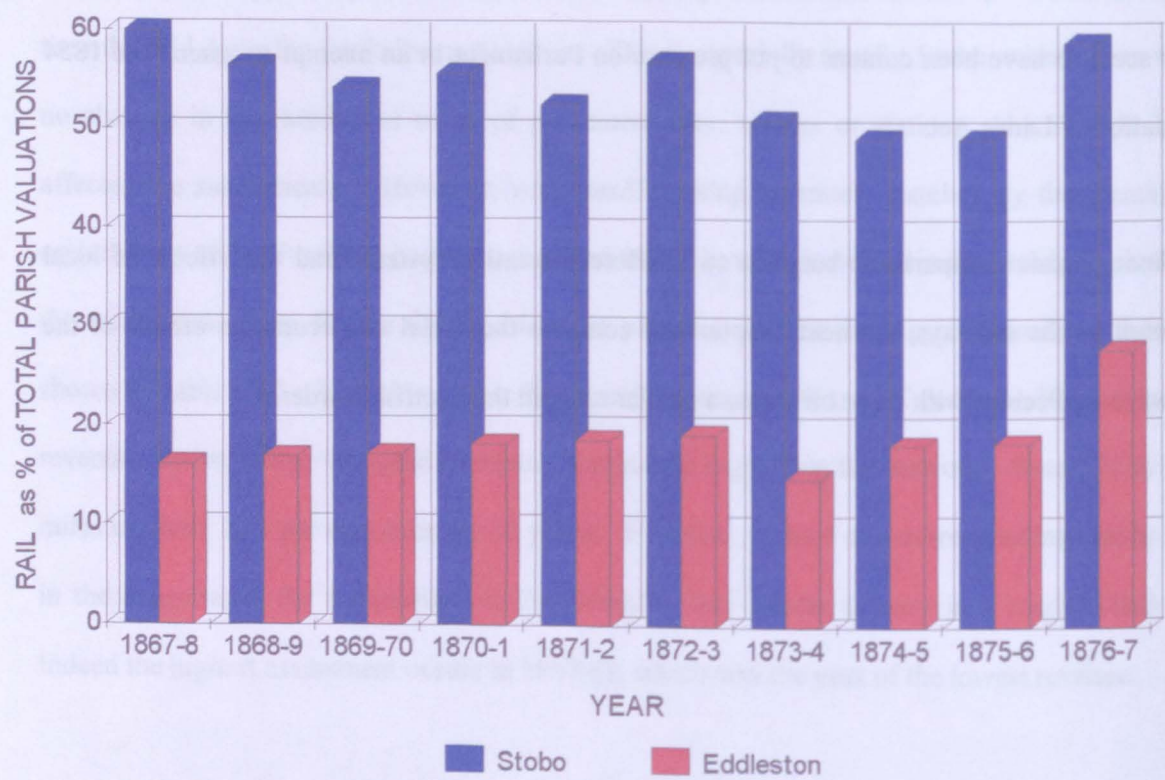


Fig.12-1. Railway and Parish valuations for Stobo and Eddleston.<sup>44</sup>

<sup>44</sup> The Valuation Rolls are only available from the 1867-8 financial year onwards.



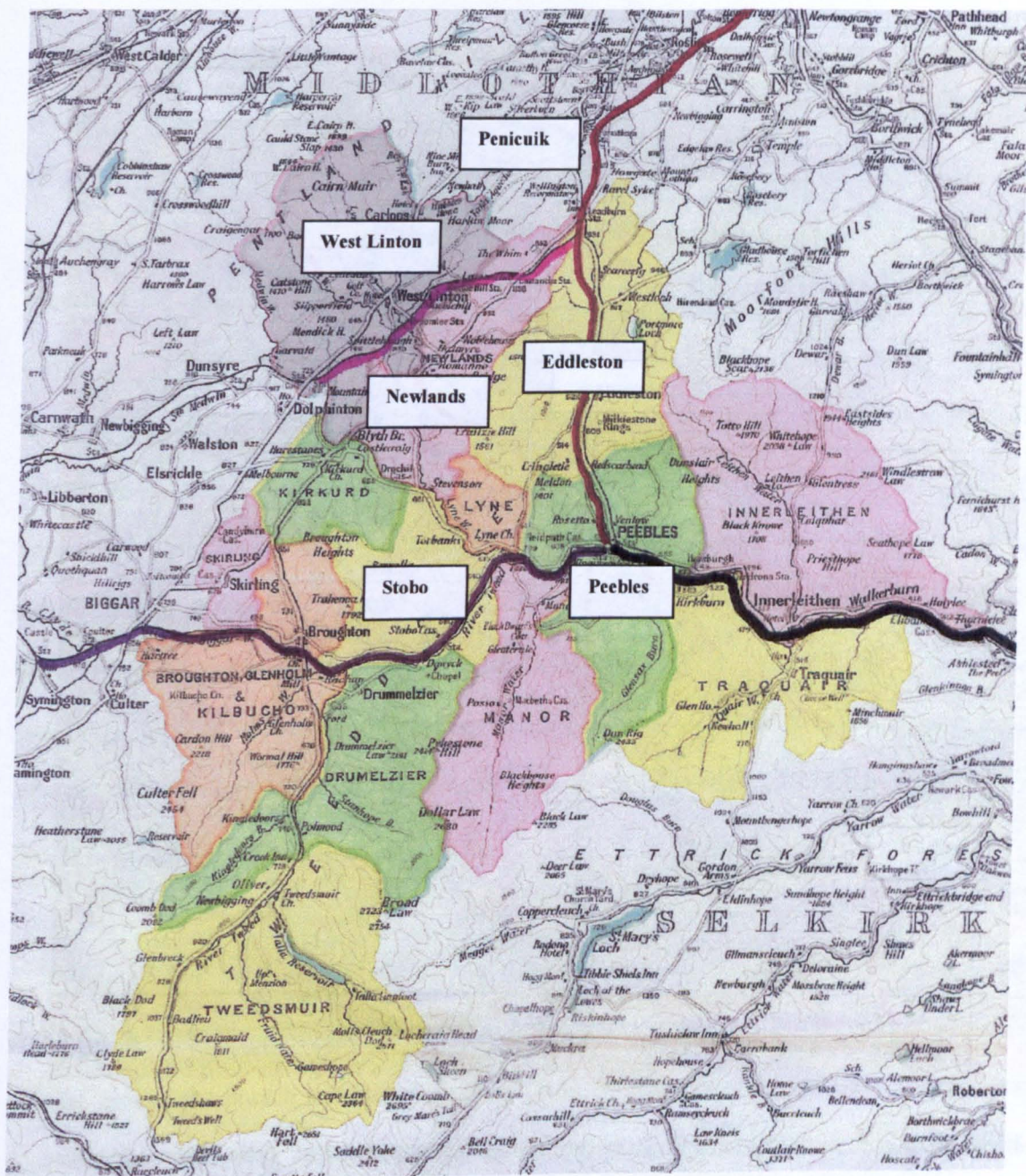


Fig.12-2. The parishes and railways of Peeblesshire. Scale 1 inch = 5 miles

(Modified version of the county map from Buchan's 1925 *History of Peeblesshire*.)



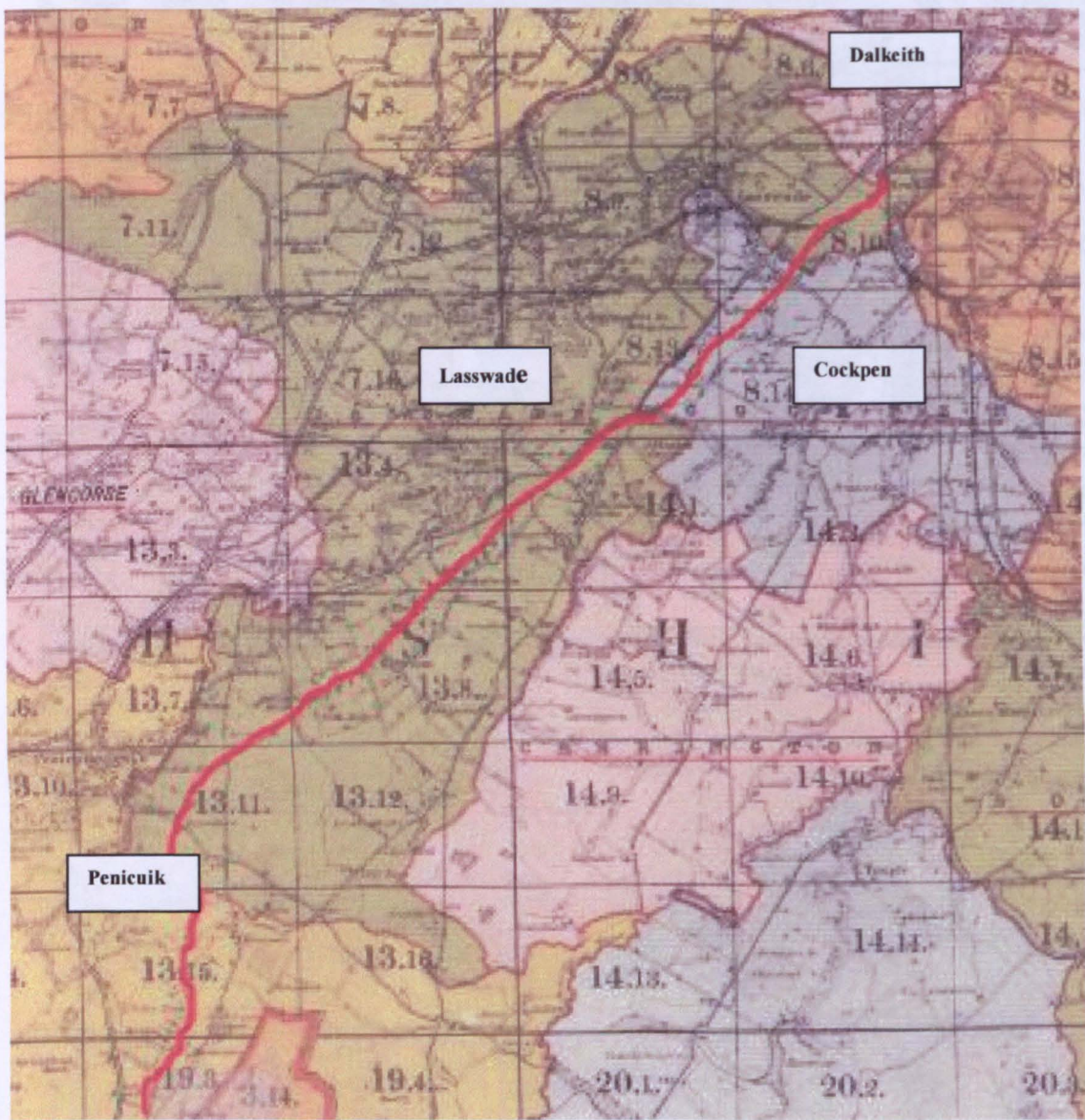


Fig.12-3. Route of the Peebles Railway through Midlothian parishes. Scale 1 inch = 1.25 miles

(Fig 12-3 is based on part of the 1893 map of Midlothian, held in the NLS Map Library. Lasswade had a much greater length of the PR than the other Midlothian parishes, and was consequently paid the highest amount in rates by the PRC.)



## COMPARATIVE EFFECTS OF THE RAILWAYS ON PEEBLES AND DUNS

In the two previous chapters we made comparisons between railway company schemes to encourage the physical growth of suburbs, and between the systems which inflicted high levels of local taxation on the railways. We shall now compare Peebles in the second half of the nineteenth century with a similar Scottish town, to see how far their experience of local railways was similar. There are several reasons why the Berwickshire town of Duns is suitable for such a comparison.<sup>1</sup> Like Peebles, Duns was the most important town in its county; it was also situated in the Scottish Borders; it was not too dissimilar in size or population; and it achieved a locally-sponsored railway at roughly the same time. Finally, before the arrival of the railways, both towns were agricultural rather than industrial centres, with population growths below the national average. This chapter will compare the economic development of Peebles and Duns, in order to see whether the towns derived similar benefits after the arrival of their railways. It will also look at the Acts of Parliament that created the Berwickshire and the Peebles Railways, to see whether there were any significant differences between the Acts that might have affected the way the lines were built and operated.

In August 1849, the North British Railway (NBR) opened a double-track branch to Duns, eight and a half miles in length, from Reston Junction on the Edinburgh-Berwick main line. To avoid marshy ground the branch terminated south of Duns, so that the station was about half a mile from the town centre (Fig.13-1). However, the NBR was over-optimistic in its forecast of traffic over the branch, and eight years later one of the tracks was lifted. Despite this setback, in 1862 a group of local landowners promoted the Berwickshire Railway Company (BRC). Their railway, some 21 miles long, would extend westwards from Duns to link up with the NBR Edinburgh-Hawick line at Ravenswood Junction, just north of St Boswells (see Frontispiece). The NBR Waverley Route between Edinburgh and Carlisle was currently being completed south

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<sup>1</sup> I have used the modern spelling, but until 1882 the town was still known by its old name of Dunse. Although the virtual capital of Berwickshire, it did not replace Greenlaw as the county town until 1903.

of Hawick, and so the new railway would directly connect the two NBR main routes towards England. It was promoted as an outlet for the export of agricultural produce from the rich farmland area in Berwickshire—known as the Merse—to north-west England via the Waverley line, and would be 31 miles shorter than the existing route from Duns, the principal marketplace.<sup>2</sup>

The Berwickshire Railway Act (25 & 26 Vict. c.142) was dated 7 July 1862, and, except for one major and two minor differences, it was similar to the Peebles Act. The major difference was the involvement of the NBR as a 50 per cent shareholder, and the consequences that followed from this. Of the Authorised Capital of £100,000, half was to be provided by local subscribers, while the NBR was to raise the other half by the issue of new preference shares. However, the NBR would not be called upon to pay its half until the locally-subscribed capital had been fully called up, and expended to “the Satisfaction of the North British Railway Company.” Although the Berwickshire Railway (BR) was to be two miles longer than the Peebles line, it only needed four small rural stations since the termini at Duns and St Boswells were already in place. Nevertheless, the initial BRC capital was 43 per cent greater than that of the Peebles Railway Company (PRC). The reasons for this were that the BRC promoters agreed to buy more land than was initially required, and they were also faced with the formidable task of bridging the River Tweed.

There was a prior agreement of seventeen clauses, dated 20 March 1862, between the BRC and the NBR, which was incorporated into the Berwickshire Railway Act. The main provisions of this agreement were as follows. Although the BR was to be a single line, the NBR demanded that sufficient land be bought by the BRC to allow for a second track, should future traffic warrant this. To avoid the problem of broken rails that had dogged the St Andrews Railway (Chapter 5), the rails used in the construction had to be at least “65 Pounds to the yard, with Fish-

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<sup>2</sup> J. Thomas, *A Regional History of the Railways of Great Britain* (Newton Abbott, 1984), Vol.6, p.100.

joints and with Sleepers placed at a not greater Distance than Three Feet from each other.<sup>3</sup> After an initial period of six months during which the line was to be worked and maintained at the cost of the BRC, the NBR would operate and maintain the railway for a period of ten years, renewable by agreement.<sup>4</sup> In the event that additions or extensions should become necessary due to increasing traffic, then “they shall be provided by and at the Expense of the Berwickshire Railway Company.”<sup>5</sup>

The arrangements for sharing the revenue were spelled out. The expenses of cartage from stations to individual addresses were to be paid directly to the NBR out of gross revenues. Then, “as a Remuneration for working and maintaining the Line,” the NBR was to receive 50 per cent of the remainder. The other half, payable on the first day of every month, would go to the BRC for the payment of Government taxes and local rates, interest on loans to the Company, management expenses and dividends upon the Company’s shares. Except for the ‘cartage’ clause, the revenue split was similar to the 1861 leasing agreement between the NBR and the PRC. Financial records were to be kept by the NBR, with the BRC having “free access to inspect such Books of Accounts and all other Documents relating to the Traffic of the said Railway at all reasonable Times.”<sup>6</sup>

The BRC would have five directors of whom three were to be elected by shareholders: the NBR would not be allowed to vote its shares in this election. The other two were to be appointed by the NBR. The three shareholder-appointed Directors would be re-elected or replaced every third year in accordance with the provisions of the Companies Clauses Consolidation (Scotland) Act of 1845. But the two NBR Directors were to remain in office for life or until replaced by the NBR, and were not subject to rotation or re-election. The first BRC-elected Directors were Sir Hugh Hume Campbell, Bart., of Marchmont, George Cranstoun

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<sup>3</sup> BRC-NBR Agreement, Clause 2, p.1956.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid.*, Clause 3, p.1956.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, Clause 6, p.1956.

Trotter Cranstoun of Dewar, and James Dalrymple of Langlea. The NBR nominees were the NBR Chairman and Vice-Chairman, Richard Hodgson M.P. and Mark Sprot. This was in marked contrast to the PRC Board, where, even after the 1861 leasing agreement, there were never any Directors appointed by the NBR.

The first minor difference was that unlike the Peebles Railway Act which had no pre-conditions imposed by local landowners, the BRC was burdened with two. Where the line crossed the Drygrange Estate near Earlston, the BRC was forced to ensure that the railway was invisible from Drygrange House by the construction of an artificial mound with grassy slopes.<sup>7</sup> Then, Sir Hugh Hume Campbell, the Company Chairman and principal promoter, required that the BRC should build a station about 350 yards from his residence, Marchmont House, "at which Station all ordinary Passenger Trains shall stop for the Purpose of Traffic."<sup>8</sup>

The ceremony of turning the first sod took place at Greenlaw on 14 October 1862. Starting from Duns, construction had reached Earlston by November 1863, with the four intermediate stations having been completed at Marchmont, Greenlaw, Gordon and Earlston. The contractors then had to overcome a major obstacle. Bridging the River Tweed at Leaderfoot involved the building of a 19-arch masonry viaduct, 907 feet long and 123 feet high, which delayed the completion of the line by almost two years (Fig.13-2). Such a barrier to progress had not faced Bouch and the contractors of the PRC. In view of this, it seems rather perverse that the BRC Act (Clause 34) required the railway to be completed within four years, while the PRC had been allowed five years. This was the second minor difference between the BRC and the PRC Acts.

The Berwickshire Railway finally opened on 2 October 1865, with an average of four passenger trains daily in each direction between St Boswells and Berwick on Tweed, which was

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<sup>6</sup> BRC-NBR Agreement, Clause 14, p.1958.

<sup>7</sup> BRC Act., Clause 23, p.1942.

<sup>8</sup> *ibid.*, Clause 36, p.1945.

the maximum number specified in the Agreement. The 42-mile journey took about one and a half hours, or about same time as the 27-mile journey between Peebles and Edinburgh. However, the PRC had more stops, and there was always a slight delay at Eskbank for the exchange of locomotives between the PRC and NBR.

Since the BRC Minute Books have not survived, passenger and freight information is rather limited. Unlike the situation in Peebles the BR had a competitor, since a cross-country railway between St Boswells and Tweedmouth had been in operation for 14 years (see Frontispiece). The line between Tweedmouth and Kelso belonged to the North Eastern Railway Company of England, while the Kelso to St Boswells section was owned by the NBR. It seems clear that the available Berwickshire traffic did not justify two east-west lines running so close to each other, and although the BRC "did manage to carry considerable quantities of freight, it was always lightly loaded as far as passengers were concerned."<sup>9</sup> Apart from agricultural produce, much of the freight consisted of building stone from quarries near Earlston.

The branch managed to survive until August 1948 when floods washed away part of the line between Duns and Greenlaw, but the Duns-Reston section remained open for passengers until September 1951 and for freight until November 1966. In Peebles, the former Caledonian Railway line from Broughton was closed to passengers in June 1950 and to freight in June 1954, while the Eskbank-Peebles-Galashiels loop was closed completely in February 1962.<sup>10</sup>

### **Duns before and after the Railway**

The railways of Peebles made a considerable impact on the town in terms of population growth, in the establishment of the woollen mills, and in the rise of tourism. Did its railway produce a comparable effect upon Duns? Unlike Peebles, which was isolated before the arrival

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<sup>9</sup> B. Peacock, *Border Country Railways* (Hawick, 1982) p.15.

<sup>10</sup> J.L. Brown and I.C. Lawson, *History of Peebles 1850-1990* (Edinburgh, 1990) pp.335-7.

of the railways, Duns had good road communications, and was on the stagecoach route between Edinburgh and London. The town had its own coaching inn, the Black Bull. “Four lines of road diverge from the town nearly in the direction of the cardinal points; and lead the way through the parish respectively toward Edinburgh, Berwick, Coldstream and Lauder.”<sup>11</sup> These roads still exist and can be seen clearly in Fig.13-1. The distance to Edinburgh by road via Haddington was 44 miles, while to Berwick on Tweed it was 15½ miles.

Duns was the marketing centre for a rich agricultural district, and its first bank opened in 1784,<sup>12</sup> over 40 years before the first bank in Peebles. Both were branches of the British Linen Bank that had emerged out of the British Linen Company (BLC), incorporated in 1746 by Royal Charter. A decade later, the BLC was probably the largest firm in Scotland, and was involved “in every stage of the manufacture of linen cloth from the importation of the flax to the bleaching of the woven cloth.”<sup>13</sup> But, after the Government temporarily withdrew the linen industry ‘bounty’ in the 1750s, the BLC Directors began to concentrate on providing banking services to linen and other textile manufacturers.<sup>14</sup> Although there was handloom weaving carried on in Duns throughout the first half of the nineteenth century, “it did not sensibly impress on the town a manufacturing character.”<sup>15</sup> Table 13-1 compares the pre-railway populations of Duns and Peebles. Neither parish matched the contemporary trend in Scotland, but, compared to Peebles, the population of Duns was static.

	1801	1811	1821	1831	1841	1851	% Increase
Peebles	2088	2485	2701	2750	2629	2669	28.0
Duns	3163	3082	3773	3469	3138	3407	7.7
Scotland	1.625M	1.806M	2.092M	2.364M	2.620M	2.889M	77.8

Table 13-1. Population changes in Peebles and Duns, 1801-1851.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Fullarton's *Gazetteer of Scotland* (Edinburgh, 1851) p.409.  
<sup>12</sup> R.G. Johnston, *Duns dings a'* (Duns, 1953) p.26.  
<sup>13</sup> A.J. Durie, (ed.) *The British Linen Company, 1745-1775* (Scottish Historical Society, Fifth Series, Vol.9, 1996) pp.5-6.  
<sup>14</sup> *ibid.* "The transition from linen to banking was complete by the mid-1770s." p.16.  
<sup>15</sup> Fullarton, *op.cit.*, (ref.11) p.410. This assessment agrees with that of the 1845 *New Statistical Account*.  
<sup>16</sup> 1801 to 1831 from the returns for the decennial Population Acts; 1841 and 1851 from Census returns.

By a quirk of history, the towns differed in the way in which they were administered. Peebles was a self-governing Royal Burgh, run by an elected Provost, two Baillies, a Treasurer and 13 Town Councillors. Duns was a Burgh of Barony, where the Chief Magistrate and Chairman of the Police Commissioners was the Baron Baillie—appointed by the Feu Superior<sup>17</sup>—and who was assisted by a Council of nine Feuars. Together they managed the ‘common good’ and the town property vested in them; and, as Police Commissioners, superintended the business of lighting, paving, cleansing and various smaller matters.<sup>18</sup> According to Fullarton, the revenue available to the Duns Feuars in 1833 amounted to £123 15s., while the Peebles Town Council Minutes show that Peebles Councillors had over five times this amount at their disposal, a total of £643 9s. 2¼d. The difference was mainly due to the income derived from what remained of several grants of land to Peebles, made by earlier kings of Scotland (Chapter 2).

Before 1850 there was nothing much to differentiate between the economies of the towns, as both were based upon the agriculture of the surrounding districts, for which they provided the marketplaces. The only industries consisted of handloom weaving of cotton, wool and linen, together with stone quarrying that was mainly for local use. Before the arrival of the railways, both towns relied upon carriers for the delivery of goods and produce. Table 13-2 shows the numbers of textile workers and carriers in Peebles and Duns, derived from Census returns.

It is clear that the towns initially concentrated on different types of cloth: with Peebles it was cotton, while Duns tended to specialise in linen, since flax had once been an important crop in Berwickshire. This probably explains the early British Linen Bank connection with Duns. As time went on, cotton and linen disappeared in both towns. With a bigger population than Peebles until the 1870s, it does not seem likely that Duns had so few carriers between 1841 and

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<sup>17</sup> In 1489, a Charter from King James IV forming Duns into a Burgh of Barony was granted to George Hume of Aytoun. The estate was bought by William Hay of Drumelzier in 1698, and the Hay family were still appointing the Baillie when the BRC was incorporated in 1862. (Information provided by the Secretary of the Duns History Society).

<sup>18</sup> Fullarton, *op.cit.*, (ref.11) p.410.

1871 as the Census returns indicated. According to Pigot's Commercial Directory, Duns had seven carriers in 1837 while Slater noted six in 1852 (see Table 13-4). Several more might have been based in neighbouring parishes or in Berwick upon Tweed, the nearest large town.

	PEEBLES				DUNS			
Textiles	1841	1861	1871	1891	1841	1861	1871	1891
Cotton	62	3	0	0	3	0	0	0
Wool	21	73	162	735	8	18	39	78
Linen	2	0	0	0	20	6	2	0
Unspecified	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	85	76	162	735	51	24	41	78
Carriers	8	3	2	1	5	0	2	1
Carters	<u>2</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>23</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>15</u>	<u>9</u>
	10	12	15	24	5	5	17	10

Table 13-2. Textile workers and carriers in Peebles and Duns.<sup>19</sup>

Duns had been joined to the main East Coast railway route between Edinburgh and London in 1849, six years before the Peebles Railway began operations. But, apart from the excitement of the opening day—when two full trains carried passengers free of charge from Duns to Berwick and back—thereafter the results were so disappointing that the NBR removed one of the tracks to make the branch into a single line.<sup>20</sup> On the other hand the PRC enjoyed a very different situation, which was exemplified by the arrival of an excursion train from Edinburgh with over 500 passengers, within a month of the opening of the line. I found no evidence that tourism ever developed as a significant feature in the economy of Duns during the second half of the nineteenth century.

The opening of the PRC was a signal for the advent of the woollen mills in Peebles, but this failed to happen in the town of Duns itself. However, in 1854, on the site of a former waulk mill

<sup>19</sup> These figures are derived from Appendices 3 and 4, which were extracted from the various Census Enumerators' Books.



on the Whitadder Water at Cumledge—two miles north of the town (Fig.13-1)—William Laidlaw, a native of Hawick, established a woollen mill (Fig.13-3). His mother Ann came from Peebles, while his uncle was “the founder of the well-known tweed manufacturing firm of Wm. Laidlaw & Sons, Teviot Crescent Mills, Hawick.”<sup>21</sup> The Cumledge mill began operating as a spinner of hosiery yarns, with which Laidlaw was very familiar as he had been a stocking frame knitter as a young man.<sup>22</sup> However, he soon decided to switch to woollen blankets instead of yarn, and the necessary machinery was installed in 1855. “A splendid business has been built up by Mr Laidlaw, latterly assisted by his sons, and the excellence of the blankets from Cumledge Mills is known throughout the length and breadth of the British Empire and beyond it.”<sup>23</sup> At the height of production, the mill was producing a thousand blankets a day.

Compared with the Peebles mills, Cumledge was at a disadvantage in that Duns railway station was 2½ miles from the mill, adding a significant cartage cost to the delivery of its raw materials and to the dispatch of finished goods. On the other hand, the mills in Peebles were all within half a mile of the two railway stations, and the Ballantyne mill even had its own railway siding. It was fortunate for Duns that Laidlaw had found a niche product. Since he had no competitor in the south of Scotland, he did not have to worry unduly about transport costs.

Laidlaw was the biggest employer in the eastern Borders, and he provided houses for some of his workers adjacent to the mill (Fig.13-3). Although Table 13-2 only shows 39 woollen workers in the Parish of Duns in 1871, and 78 in 1891, according to the *Southern Reporter* the Cumledge Mill employed about 100 people in the 1890s. However, it is likely that some of them lived in the village of Preston in the neighbouring parish (Fig.13-1). “What Cumledge

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<sup>20</sup> J. Thomas, *The North British Railway* (Newton Abbott, 1969) p.110.

<sup>21</sup> *The Border Magazine*, Vol X, No 118. (October 1905) p.182.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, pp.182-3. But, immediately before coming to Cumledge, Laidlaw was a grocer in Hawick.

<sup>23</sup> *ibid.*, p.183.

Mills [*sic*] has meant to the district can never be fully judged, but we are safe in saying that for one hundred years it has been one of the leading institutions in our county.”<sup>24</sup>

Nevertheless, it was the only mill in the Parish and it never achieved the size of the Thorburn and Ballantyne establishments in Peebles, which is reflected in the population figures of Table 13-3. The population of Duns Parish reached a peak at about the time of the 1871 Census, and by 1891 it had fallen back to the 1841 level. On the other hand the Peebles numbers had doubled, being swollen by incoming mill workers, and also by railwaymen and their families. Once the Caledonian Railway arrived, Peebles had more resident railwaymen than Duns (Appendices 3 and 4). As shown in Table 13-3, over the fifty years to 1891, the Peebles population grew at almost twice the Scottish average, and overtook the population of Duns some time in the mid-1870s.

	1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	% Increase
<b>Peebles</b>	<b>2629</b>	<b>2669</b>	<b>2850</b>	<b>3172</b>	<b>4055</b>	<b>5258</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Duns</b>	<b>3138</b>	<b>3407</b>	<b>3595</b>	<b>3602</b>	<b>3353</b>	<b>3137</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Scotland</b>	<b>2.620M</b>	<b>2.889M</b>	<b>3.062M</b>	<b>3.360M</b>	<b>3.736M</b>	<b>4.026M</b>	<b>53.7</b>

Table 13-3. Population changes in Peebles and Duns, 1841-1891

We are able to get a fair indication of half a century of business activity in the two towns by studying the commercial directories published during the period: the results are summarised in Table 13-4. The material in this table has been compiled from four Commercial Directories of Scotland: Pigot 1837, and Slater 1852, 1867 and 1889 (see Bibliography). Such commercial directories provide what is possibly the best available information on the general state of commerce and the professions in nineteenth century Britain. However, since the entries had to be paid for, it is likely that some of the smaller tradesmen did not think it worth their while to subscribe, and therefore the lists are not necessarily complete. To take just one example of this,

<sup>24</sup> *The Southern Reporter*, 15/4/1954. Article celebrating the Cumledge Mill Centenary.

TRADE/PROFESSION	PEEBLES				DUNS			
	1837	1852	1867	1889	1837	1852	1867	1889
Brewers	3	2	1	0	3	3	0	0
Coopers	3	3	1	0	3	1	0	0
Inn and Hotel Keepers	3	4	5	5	2	2	2	2
Bakers	4	4	5	7	8	14	10	8
Cabinet Makers/Upholsterers	3	2	2	3	4	4	3	4
Boots & Shoes	8	9	9	9	21	18	10	7
Tailors	6	8	8	9	14	9	8	6
Milliners/Dressmakers	3	8	5	6	4	10	12	9
Chemists/Druggists	2	2	1	3	1	2	3	3
Butchers/Fleshers	3	3	4	5	7	7	5	7
Grocers/Spirit dealers	7	12	16	24	10	18	20	19
Masons/Builders	4	4	5	8	3	4	5	3
Painters & Glaziers	3	2	3	4	3	3	2	3
Tanners & Skinners	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	0
Blacksmiths/Farriers	6	4	3	3	7	8	4	4
Ironmongers	3	2	6	5	3	3	4	5
Nailmakers	3	2	2	0	3	2	0	0
Saddlers	3	2	3	2	2	2	2	2
Clock & Watchmakers	3	2	3	3	2	4	4	5
Wrights/Carpenters	6	4	7	6	7	8	7	5
China & Glass Dealers	2	2	3	5	2	1	3	2
Linen & Woollen Drapers	4	4	4	10	7	5	6	5
Weavers	1	6	3	0	1	4	0	0
Slaters	2	1	2	3	3	3	4	2
Plumbers	0	1	3	3	1	1	3	3
Booksellers/Printers	1	2	2	6	3	3	4	4
Hairdressers	1	1	1	1	3	2	1	2
Insurance Agents	6	9	24	26	4	12	22	30
Bankers	1	3	4	3	3	4	4	3
Solicitors/Writers	5	5	5	4	10	11	9	11
Surgeons/Doctors	4	4	3	3	6	6	3	4
Veterinary Surgeons	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2
Auctioneers	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Nursery & Seedsmen	2	2	6	2	0	2	4	4
Carriers	5	3	3	0	7	6	0	0

Table 13-4 Peebles and Duns—Commercial Directory evidence.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> An expanded version of the Directory entries for Peebles will be found in Appendix 2. From the names and addresses, one can follow the succession of proprietors and the changing locations of their firms.

the 1841 Census lists many more weavers than are shown in the 1837 directories for either town. Presumably, those that do appear were master weavers employing others. But, there is enough information in the directories to provide a reasonable picture of the scope and the changes in commercial activity in Peebles and Duns, over the half a century before and after the railways. As one would expect, the lists of trades and professions for Peebles and Duns are fairly similar, and may well be typical of Victorian country towns. It is the changes over the years, and the anomalies, which provide the main interest.

Brewers and coopers disappeared with the rise of large breweries such as McEwan and Younger in Edinburgh, where economies of scale outweighed railway transport costs. The same was true of nail making, while traditional local trades such as tanning and skinning declined. The railways also took over the business of the long-distance carriers. In many cases, as might be expected, the number of men in a particular trade or profession in Peebles increased over the years as the population rose, while similar trades declined in Duns as the population fell. The tapering off of handloom weaving in both towns was the result of the introduction of steam-powered woollen mills in the Borders.

Although Duns was never included in Slater's *Lodging Houses* category (Appendix 2), and the recorded number of masons and slaters had fallen by 1889, this does not mean that there was no pressure on housing. For example, the 1851 Census reveals that there were four lodging-house keepers in Duns, while boarders in private houses ranged through all levels of society from the Sheriff Substitute to an apprentice baker. Indeed, the considerable number of lodgers recorded in both Peebles and Duns was a feature of the Census returns. Notwithstanding the fact that both towns had a County Poorhouse, the figures in Table 13-5 probably include a number of paupers who had been boarded out. Some parishes found this a cheaper option. The incoming railway and woollen workers would account for the vast majority of the lodgers in Peebles after 1855, but there is no comparable explanation for the increasing numbers in Duns up to 1881.

Viewing the number of tailors, shoemakers and grocers in Table 13-4 compared to the population of each town, makes one wonder how they all managed to make a living. The large number and range of insurance agencies also seems to have been a feature at this time, many of

CENSUS		1841	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891
Peebles	Lodgers	N/A	44	99	128	263	253
	Population	2629	2669	2850	3172	4055	5258
Duns	Lodgers	10	75	113	107	121	107
	Population	3138	3407	3595	3602	3353	3137

Table 13-5 The number lodgers in Peebles and Duns compared to the population.

these being held by local solicitors. Fullarton in 1851 remarked on the surprising number of lawyers in Duns, which remained true throughout the period. The number is rather astonishing since Greenlaw was then the county town and the Sheriff Court was located there. Duns did not even have a police station until 1895. Peebles had both a Sheriff Court and a police station, but managed with only half the number of solicitors. It would be an interesting subject for further research to find out where the available business came from to support the Duns lawyers.

## Conclusions

Duns is a case that illustrates Simmons' observation that "the railway did not necessarily produce growth, in population or business."<sup>26</sup> In accounting for its relative decline compared to Peebles, the issue of economic geography is of prime importance. There was no large river flowing through Duns to provide the water power and facilities for washing, dyeing and fulling textiles that Peebles enjoyed from the River Tweed and the Eddleston Water. The spread of railways in south-east Scotland put an end to the stagecoach, and with it the significance of Duns in the network of communications between Edinburgh and London. Although the town was the

<sup>26</sup> J. Simmons, *The Railway in Town and Country 1830-1914* (Newton Abbot, 1986) p.16.

marketing centre for the Merse, the BR was not the only connection between the East Coast main line and the Waverley Route. The BRC had to share the available goods traffic with the line between Tweedmouth and St Boswells, and there was never any possibility that Duns and the villages along the railway would generate a profitable passenger business. Although Duns had a railway connection to Edinburgh six years before Peebles, the town was too far from Edinburgh—and had too few attractions—to encourage the day-trippers and holidaymakers who flocked to Peebles in such large numbers. A further drawback was that none of the original BRC Directors lived in Duns, to do for the town what Bathgate, Chambers and Thorburn of the PRC so successfully did for Peebles. Apart from the Laidlaw family at Cumledge, Duns does not seem to have produced any noteworthy entrepreneurs. Had the Peebles trio lived in Duns, they might possibly have made a difference to its economic future.

Peebles fared better than Duns as the result of the railways—as did the PRC shareholders<sup>27</sup>—mainly because of geographical and competition considerations, but the quality of the PRC management was also a contributory factor in this outcome. In the end, both Companies were taken over by the NBR on the same day, 1 August 1876, but it is unlikely that the Berwickshire Railway shareholders received terms as favourable as those extracted from the NBR Board by Chambers on behalf of the PRC. Unfortunately, the BRC Minute Books have not survived, and there is therefore no way of confirming this.

Having compared the effects of the railways on Peebles and Duns, the next chapter will consider the Maryport & Carlisle and the Wharfedale Railways. Here, the deplorable financial mismanagement by irresponsible Boards seriously affected the two lines, which, from the outset, had all the prospects of success. The lessons learned were not lost on the PRC Directors.

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<sup>27</sup> For example, in 1871 the PRC paid an ordinary dividend of 6½%: the BR paid 1%. (*Herapath's Railway Journal*) 1871. (NAS BR/PER(S)/3/33). In 1875, the last full year before both Companies were taken over by the NBR, the figures were 7½% and 1¼% respectively. (*Railway News*) 1875, (NAS BR/PER(S)/7/17-8).

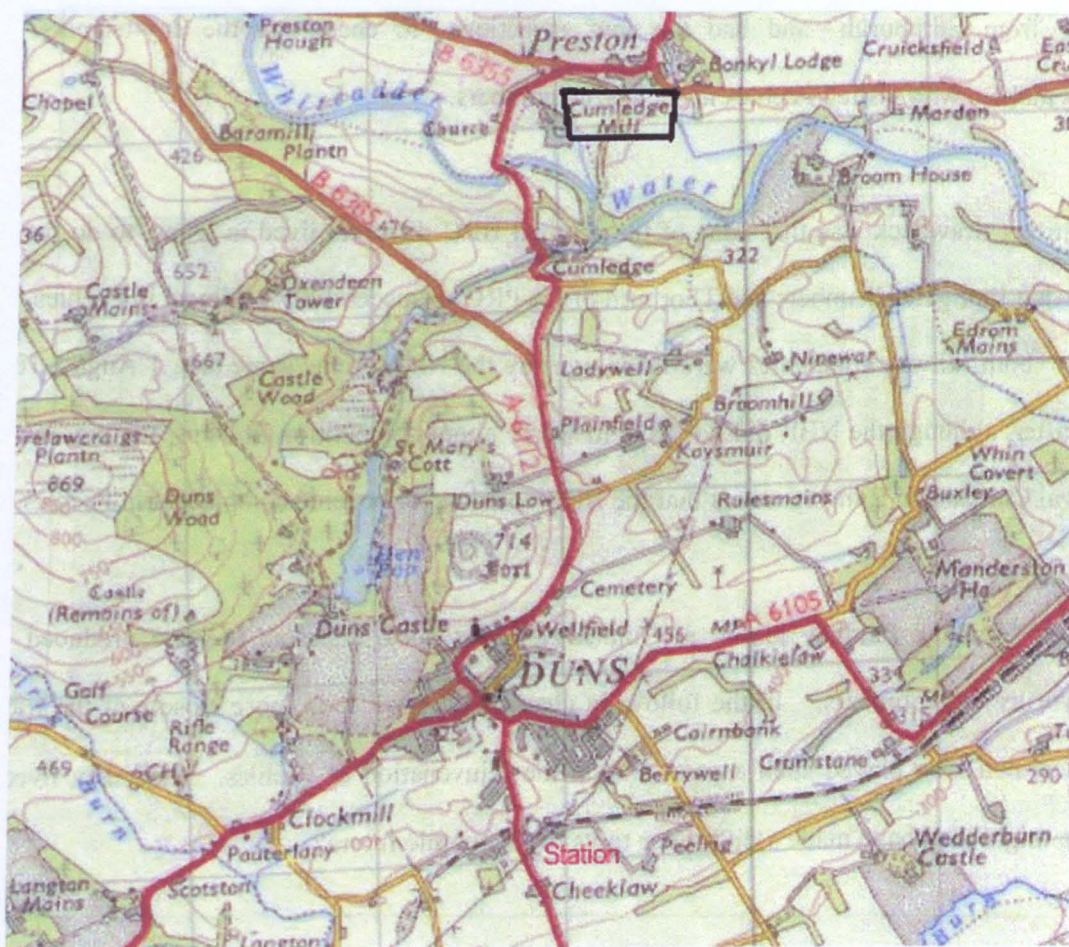


Fig.13-1. The location of Duns railway station and Cumledge Mill. Scale 1 inch = 1 mile

(Adapted from Map 63 of the 1956 Ordnance Survey one-inch edition.)



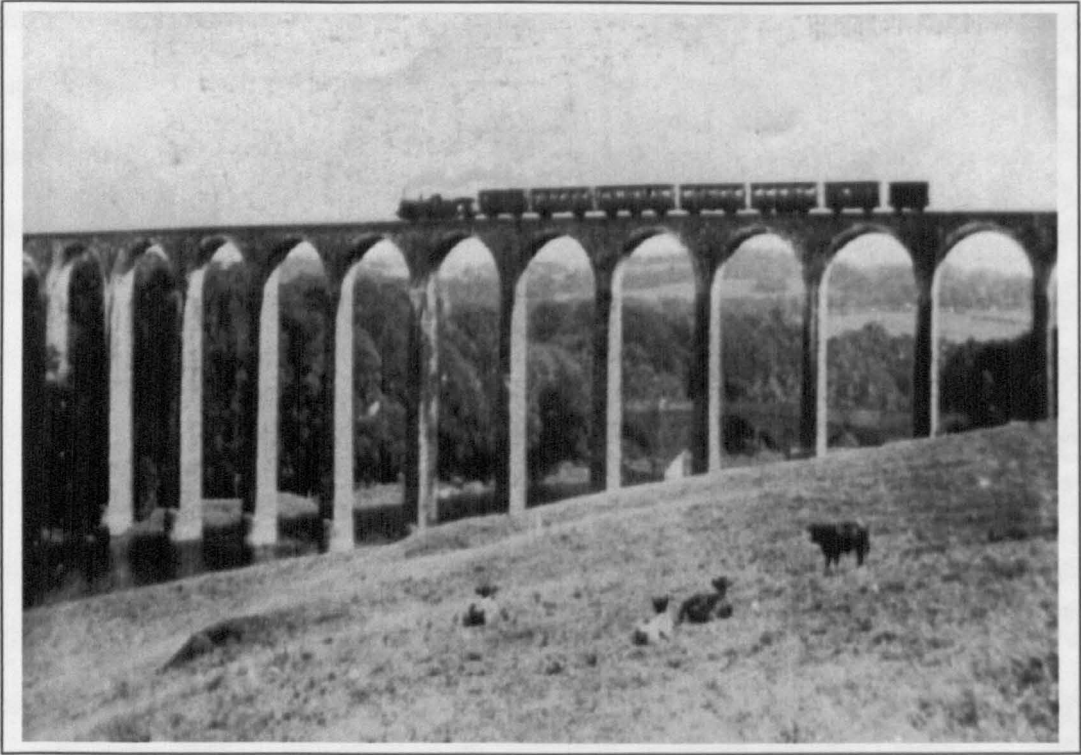


Fig.13-2. The Leaderfoot viaduct of the Berwickshire Railway, *circa* 1890.<sup>28</sup>

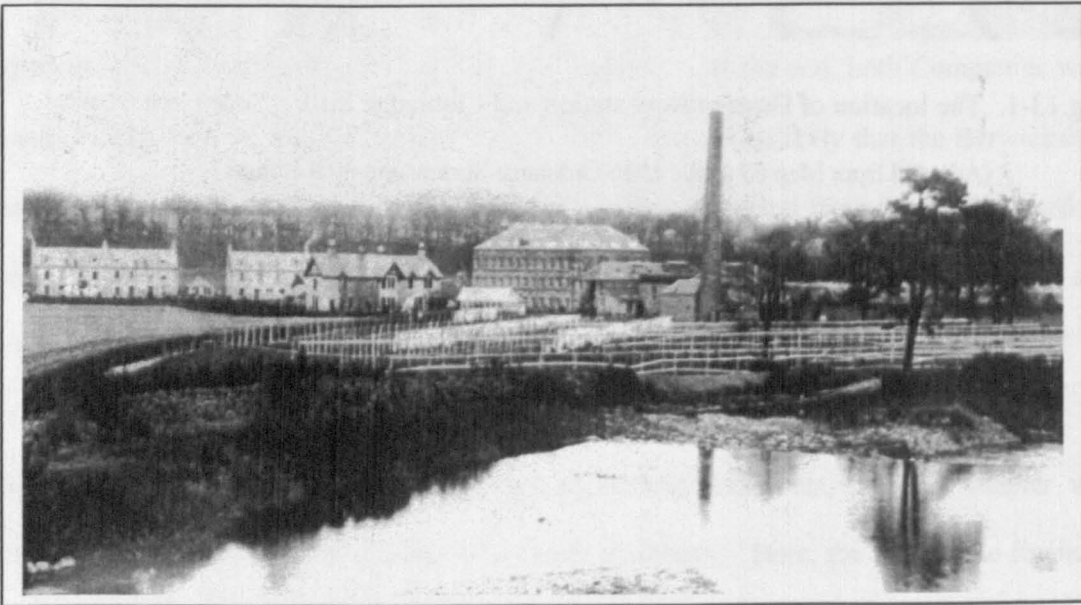


Fig.13-3. The Cumledge Blanket Mill near Duns, *circa* 1900.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>28</sup> Photograph from Smith, I.R., *Scotland's Lost Railways: 1 The Borders* (Edinburgh, 1982) Plate 23.

<sup>29</sup> Photograph courtesy of the Duns History Society.



## TWO BRANCH LINES AND THEIR FINANCES

The purpose of this chapter is to look at the history of two branch lines in northern England—the Maryport & Carlisle Railway and the Wharfedale Railway—and to compare their financial management with that of the Peebles Railway Company (PRC). Simmons referred to the Maryport & Carlisle Railway (M&CR) as “a perfect specimen of the small, independent local railway company.”<sup>1</sup> However, it was unusual in that it remained independent for 85 years, until the Government-driven railway amalgamations of 1923. We saw in Chapter 4 that when the PRC Directors found that the NBR terms for operating their line would be too expensive, they sent John Bathgate to investigate the operations and running costs of several small railways. The M&CR was the first of these, and what he found probably had a significant influence on the way in which the PRC decided to manage its finances. There is no evidence that Bathgate ever investigated the Wharfedale Railway (WR), but he would have been well aware of its problems from reports in the railway press.

### Promotion of the Maryport & Carlisle Railway

Coal had been mined in West Cumberland since the mid-seventeenth century. Humphrey Senhouse owned a large estate and a colliery near the mouth of the River Ellen, which flows into the Solway Firth, and he obtained an Act of Parliament in 1749 to develop a new town and harbour there, which he named Maryport after his wife. Packhorses were used to bring the coal to the harbour from his colliery and from a number of other pits in the surrounding district. By the time of Senhouse’s death in 1770, Maryport already had “a flourishing export trade in coal to Ireland, imports of timber, flax and iron from the Baltic,” and had also established three small shipyards.<sup>2</sup> A blast furnace using the local, high-quality haematite iron ore went into operation in 1784. Thus, from a few fishermen’s huts and a farm in 1749 the town had grown quickly, and by 1801 the population numbered 2,932: already greater than that of long-established Peebles.

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<sup>1</sup> J. Simmons, *The Maryport & Carlisle Railway* (Chislehurst, 1947) p.34.

<sup>2</sup> *ibid.*, p.2.

The results of the Stockton & Darlington Railway had shown the M&CR promoters, who were mainly local gentry and coal-owners, how a railway would allow a more efficient exploitation of the northern half of the West Cumberland coalfield. They employed George Stephenson to survey a 27½-mile route linking Maryport and Carlisle (Fig.14-2). He reported that there were no engineering difficulties to be overcome—no tunnels; no heavy bridgework; no expensive cuttings; no large embankments; no curves of less than half a mile radius—and the flat Solway Plain meant that there were no steep gradients. “Altogether, it must be a very cheap line, not only to construct, but to work and keep in repair.”<sup>3</sup>

The prospectus emphasised that the area abounded in coal, lime and other minerals, that it already had a considerable manufacturing base, and that the Solway Plain was rich in agricultural produce. The landowners along the route were all in favour, so that exorbitant costs for the land or expensive litigation would be avoided. As a result of all these advantages, M&CR shareholders “might confidently look for a dividend of 18¾ per cent every year”, from a detailed annual income estimate of £35,544 16s. 11d.,<sup>4</sup> or almost £25 per mile per week (pmpw). This compares with Bathgate’s PRC estimate of £10 pmpw. Not surprisingly, residents of Cumberland quickly took up the bulk of the share subscriptions<sup>5</sup>—however, their hopes of a dividend of 18¾ per cent were never realised.

On 12 July 1837, The Maryport and Carlisle Railway Act (1 Vict., cap. 101) received the Royal Assent, and the *raison d’être* for the line was neatly summed up in the preamble to the Act (Fig.14-1). The Act—which, according to the *Railway Times*, had been “got at a small expense”—was 106 pages in length, and contained a number of features not found in the Peebles or the Berwickshire Railway Acts that we looked at in Chapter 13.

<sup>3</sup> *Railway Times*, 17/3/1838 p.138.

<sup>4</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.4.

<sup>5</sup> *Railway Times*, 17/3/1838, p.138.

Firstly, there were no fewer than 30 Directors named as members of the provisional M&CR Board.<sup>6</sup> At the first General Meeting of the Company, the number of Directors was then to be reduced to a maximum of fifteen, which still looks excessive for a small railway company. Secondly, the Book of Reference was inserted as part of the Act, and included the names of five of the provisional Directors. Thirdly there were two clauses that may have had a strong bearing on the subsequent behaviour of the Board. Clause CCVII stated that they were “not personally answerable for Acts illegally done as Directors.” Clause CCVIII indemnified them against “all Acts, Deeds, Matters, and Things executed, done, or ordered, and all Sums of Money, Losses, Costs, Charges and Damages which they shall incur in the Execution of the Powers and Authorities hereby granted to them.” As things transpired, these clauses seem to have been a recipe for financial chaos. Finally, Clause LXXXII laid down the order in which the track had to be laid. Once the first 12 miles had been built at the Maryport end, then the contractors had to complete six miles at the Carlisle end, “and afterwards the Work [was] to proceed simultaneously from each End.” Unless they built the railway in this way, the M&CR would not be allowed to charge rates and tolls on any completed portions of the line.

Amid great rejoicing, the ceremonial cutting of the first sod took place in Maryport on 14 May 1838. The contractors, Messrs. Blackburn & M'Kay, made reasonable progress, and by 1843 they were employing upwards of 1300 men on the line.<sup>7</sup> The 8¼-mile section between Maryport and Aspatria was completed on 24 April 1841; the 11¼ -mile section between Carlisle and Wigton was opened on 3 May 1843; and the 8-mile gap between Aspatria and Wigton was finally closed on 10 February 1845.<sup>8</sup> There had been a number of complaints that “the labourers on the line from Aspatria to Wigton are constantly permitted to work on the Sabbath Day.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> One of these was a Richard Hodgson, but a search on the Internet and in the National Library failed to establish whether this was the man who later became Chairman of the NBR.

<sup>7</sup> *Railway Times*, 9/12/1843, p.1323.

<sup>8</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) pp.8-9.

<sup>9</sup> *Railway Times*, 9/12/1843, p.1323.

According to the Act, the line had to be completed within seven years, and presumably the Sunday working was to ensure that this timescale was met.

### Financial problems

Although the construction phase went more or less according to plan, this was not the case as far as the finances were concerned. The Act stated that the Capital should be £180,000 in £50 shares, with the Directors having power to raise a further £50,000 by mortgage, once half the Capital had been paid up: these standard terms were similar to those for the Peebles Railway. However, the M&CR scripholders were reluctant to pay the 'calls' in the aftermath of the 'little Railway Mania' of the late 1830s, and by August 1840, more than half the shares had been forfeited.<sup>10</sup> In order to keep the construction moving, the Directors began to borrow money illegally, no doubt feeling that they were protected by the indemnity clauses in the Act.

The first sign of shareholder unrest over the financial situation came during the half-yearly General Meeting in February 1842, when a Mr Adam proposed a motion to appoint "a Committee of Inspection for the purpose of examining the accounts."<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately, he failed to find a Seconder. As the M&CR got further into debt, the Directors made several attempts to amalgamate the line with the Newcastle & Carlisle Railway, "particularly in 1847, when the terms proposed by the Maryport were rejected by the Newcastle company."<sup>12</sup> An investigation into the M&CR finances in 1847 was aborted when the Board leased the line to George Hudson—the so-called 'Railway King'—in return for a guaranteed dividend of four per cent.<sup>13</sup> Hudson was Chairman of the York, Newcastle & Berwick Railway, but by this time his power and influence were in decline.<sup>14</sup> The lease only lasted 15 months as his shareholders refused to endorse the deal, and, on 1 January 1850, the line reverted to the M&CR. Hudson then owed the

<sup>10</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.7.

<sup>11</sup> *Railway Times*, 26/2/1842 p.296.

<sup>12</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.10.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> For a sketch of Hudson's career, see D. Mountfield, *The Railway Barons* (London, 1979) pp.41-74.

Company £5,401 3s. 4½d.<sup>15</sup> He admitted that he had insufficient money available at this time, and in the end, the M&CR had to write off over £3,100.

An Extraordinary General Meeting was convened on 4 September 1850, where the only item on the agenda was a proposal to set up a 'Committee of Enquiry' to investigate the financial conduct of the M&CR Directors. This meeting duly appointed a committee consisting of four shareholders, the Chairman of which was G.W. Hartley, one of the original Directors in 1837. They acted with commendable speed and produced a devastating report two and a half months later, in which the financial statistics had been verified by a firm of accountants, Messrs Quilter Ball & Co.<sup>16</sup> The report stated that "the Directors persevered in their course, as if acts of Parliament were waste paper. They even ventured upon the perilous expedient of issuing debenture or loan notes to a considerable amount after the legislature had strictly prohibited such proceedings by special act of Parliament."<sup>17</sup> In other words, the Board had acted with incredible folly, if not with downright dishonesty. According to John Herapath, much of the blame lay with the M&CR shareholders, who had shown "an abominable laxity of conduct and an almost criminal state of indifference" by not attending the half-yearly Company meetings and monitoring what the Directors were doing.<sup>18</sup>

The report went on to reveal that the Directors had borrowed £200,924 4s. 9d. without legal authority, and, between 1840 and 1850, they had wrongly charged dividends, salaries, travelling expenses and even postage—amounting to a total of £43,646—to Capital instead of Revenue. Instead of the authorised £230, 000, the Capital Account was now standing at over £440,000.<sup>19</sup> During a decade when there were still a large number of 'calls' in arrears, there had been much futile expenditure. The Directors had also been negligent by failing to obtain a fair share of the

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<sup>15</sup> *Railway Times*, 9/3/1850 p.254.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, 23/11/1850, p.1178.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Herapath's Railway Journal*, (Herapath) 23/11/1850, pp.1138-9.

<sup>19</sup> *Railway Times*, 23/11/1850, p.1178.

revenue for the traffic between Newcastle and Maryport. The duties of the managers appointed by the Board had been badly defined, and there were hints of improperly exercised patronage.<sup>20</sup>

After a stormy meeting the report was accepted by the shareholders, and the M&CR Chairman J.L.B. Dykes and five directors resigned. Hartley was appointed Chairman, and two other members of the Committee of Enquiry joined the Board in the place of three directors who were due to retire by rotation. It was then agreed to cut the size of the Board to not more than seven members.<sup>21</sup> This meeting marked a turning point in the fortunes of the M&CR. On the financial front, in order to cover the outstanding debt it was agreed to raise a further mortgage of £60,000, and this was achieved by an Act of Parliament in 1851 (14 & 15 Vict. c.72). The Capital Account was then closed.<sup>22</sup> Almost immediately after taking over, the new Board began “experimenting with excursion trains, reduced fares and day tickets to boost passenger revenues.”<sup>23</sup> They installed turntables at each end of the line—the significance of which will become clear in the following chapter—completed new sidings, and built a timber slip in Maryport harbour to aid the discharge of timber from ships into the M&CR wagons.<sup>24</sup> The railway was now on a sound financial footing, and the lack of severe gradients meant that working expenses were maintained at a low level of around 40 per cent. The Company was now ready to exploit the great economic and geographical advantages it enjoyed.

### **Working the Maryport & Carlisle Railway**

The gloomy picture presented by the financial situation before 1850 does not reflect what had been happening on the ground. Once the first section between Maryport and Aspatria had opened for goods traffic in early January 1841, the M&CR began to move large quantities of

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<sup>20</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.1), p.12.

<sup>21</sup> *Railway Times*, 23/11/1850, p.1178.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, 17/4/1852, p.424.

<sup>23</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.29.

<sup>24</sup> *Herapath, op.cit.*, (ref.18) 26/11/1853, p.1257.

coal. In the half year to July 1841, coal traffic amounted to £2,130 11s.,<sup>25</sup> and Herapath believed that few undertakings had shown such positive results when only a small portion of the line was in use. By the summer of 1841, thanks to a new and more powerful locomotive and favourable gradients, coal trains of upwards of 50 wagons were being brought to Maryport harbour.<sup>26</sup> PRC engines could only cope with half a dozen or so coal wagons on the climb up to Leadburn. The M&CR Directors' Report to the half-yearly Meeting in October 1842 stated that "the traffic in coal at the Maryport end already exceeds the anticipated revenue three-fold, and will in a short time amount to £200 a week."<sup>27</sup>

It was the construction of a tidal dock at Maryport in 1836 (Fig.14-4) that had made this traffic possible, and the harbour was considerably enlarged and deepened two years later in anticipation of the arrival of the railway.<sup>28</sup> However, it soon became too small, and in 1857 the Elizabeth dock, almost 40 acres in extent, was opened amid great festivities in the town.<sup>29</sup> This was the first wet dock in Cumberland. To put the contribution of the railway to the coal traffic in perspective, the tonnage through Maryport harbour in 1867 was 476,172, compared to 66,298 in 1831. The Elizabeth dock itself became inadequate, and a further dock, the Senhouse, was added in 1884. With the help of the railway, Maryport had become—after Liverpool—the most important commercial and shipbuilding port in the north-west of England. No less than 59 master mariners were based there in 1883.<sup>30</sup> The steady increase in the population of Maryport compared to that of Peebles, (which was static until 1871) is shown in Fig.14-6. Apart from coal to Ireland, other exports included iron ore, steel rails, stone bar bolts and cast iron from the Solway Iron Works.<sup>31</sup> The three shipyards were busy throughout the period, and because the River Ellen was only 60 feet in width, ships had been launched broadside since 1818. Before

<sup>25</sup> *Herapath, op.cit.*, (ref.18) 28/8/1841, p.736.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *Railway Times*, 3/12/1842, p.1247.

<sup>28</sup> A. Robinson, *Maritime Maryport* (Whitehaven, 1978) p.1.

<sup>29</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>31</sup> Information from the Maryport Website ([www.gomaryport.co.uk](http://www.gomaryport.co.uk)).

the arrival of the M&CR, one of the long-established shipbuilders, K.Wood & Sons, stated on their letterhead that ships for repair were “taken into the yard by Iron rail-way.”<sup>32</sup>

Passengers were almost equally important to the M&CR. By 1852, annual revenues had reached the target figure of over £35,000 as promised in the original prospectus, and more than one-third of this was coming from passenger traffic.<sup>33</sup> Carlisle, the regional metropolis and a major railway centre, acted as a magnet for passengers, not only to the city itself but also because it was the gateway to London, Newcastle and Scotland. When the completed line opened in 1845 there were two passenger trains a day in each direction, and the number rose to five in 1877 and to seven in 1879. The journey time between Maryport and Carlisle was about 70 minutes.<sup>34</sup>

The line was almost half as long again as the Peebles Railway (PR), but its tally of locomotives and rolling stock was proportionately much greater. When the PR was being equipped to begin operations in 1855 its inventory was quite small (Chapter 5, p.79), whereas the M&CR owned 11 locomotives and the following rolling stock.<sup>35</sup>

4 First-class carriages	10 Second-class carriages	8 Third-class carriages
2 composite carriages	6 luggage and break [ <i>sic</i> ] vans	3 horse boxes
3 carriage trucks	14 cattle trucks	75 goods wagons
382 coal wagons (This large number emphasises the importance of coal to the M&CR.)		

During its 85 years of independence the M&CR never had any competition, and, following the reorganisation of 1850, its Directors did not attempt to expand their railway or to amalgamate with any other. They co-operated rather than competed with the other small railway companies that set up in the area. Dividends legitimately earned began in 1852 with an initial 2 per cent.<sup>36</sup> “From 1850 to 1922, through good times and bad, it paid an average dividend of over 7 per

<sup>32</sup> Robinson, *op.cit.*, (ref.28), p.8.

<sup>33</sup> Herapath, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) 17/4/1852, p.423.

<sup>34</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.1), pp.26-8.

<sup>35</sup> Herapath, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) 30/4/1853, p.485.

<sup>36</sup> *ibid.*, 28/1/1852, p.235.



cent,” with a peak of 12¾ per cent in 1871.<sup>37</sup> By the time of Bathgate’s visit in 1855, the new Board had completely turned the situation around. Had they ever been tempted to stray from the paths of fiscal rectitude, Bathgate’s report on the earlier financial troubles of the Maryport & Carlisle would have been a dire warning to the PRC Directors as to what could happen.

### Wharfedale Railway

Although the original Directors of the M&CR did not shine in their financial management, yet they were paragons compared with the original Board of the Wharfedale Railway (WR). In 1845, at the height of the Railway Mania, there were a number of conflicting schemes for lines up Wharfedale. “Of these, a local company, the Lancashire & Yorkshire North Eastern Railway, was to be the only one successful in Parliament.”<sup>38</sup> The promoters received their Act of Parliament on 16 July 1846, but the Act changed the railway’s name to the Wharfedale Railway as being more descriptive of the operating area. The proposed line was 21 miles in length, and was to run east and west between the town of Skipton on the Leeds & Bradford Railway and the village of Arthington on the Leeds & Thirsk Railway (Fig.14-7).<sup>39</sup> This was a cross-country route passing through a rich agricultural area possessing a fair amount of industry—cotton, worsted, paper, and leather<sup>40</sup>—and terminated at each end by an existing main line. (The amalgamations of the next few years saw Skipton become part of the Midland Railway (MR) network, and Arthington of the North Eastern Railway (NER) system. Most of the businesses were situated in lower Wharfedale between Burley and Arthington. The capital was set at £550,000, with the usual borrowing powers once half the shares had been subscribed for. A further £250,000 would possibly be required to build an extension as far as York, but this idea was soon abandoned. Nevertheless, the prospects for the line looked promising.

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<sup>37</sup> Simmons, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.1.

<sup>38</sup> P.E. Baughan, *The Railways of Wharfedale* (Newton Abbot, 1969) p.31.

<sup>39</sup> H.G. Lewin, *The Railway Mania and its Aftermath* (Newton abbot, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 1968) p.183.

<sup>40</sup> Details may be found in the evidence to Parliament in support of the Bill, and quoted by Baughan.

At the first General Meeting of the WR on 15 August 1846, it was agreed that the nine Directors should be paid £600 each for their services during 1846-7, which immediately reduced the working capital. The Wharfedale Act provided that the line was to be worked by the Leeds & Thirsk Railway (L&TR), but at the WR Wharnccliffe Meeting on 5 November 1846 it was agreed to reject the L&TR agreement.<sup>41</sup> Although the Board were still in favour, a majority of the shareholders disliked the idea of their railway being considered as a mere feeder for the L&TR, and thought that the line could be worked more cheaply. The outcome was that the WR could no longer expect any co-operation from the L&TR, and they were left to deal with the post-mania financial chaos on their own. From then onwards, the situation sharply deteriorated.

The necessary Bill to amend the Wharfedale Act by removing the L&TR clauses went forward in November 1846, but failed in the following Parliamentary session. At the half-yearly Meeting in March 1848, the Chairman, Matthew Wilson, announced that in view of the “severe monetary pressure” the Directors had decided that it was “inexpedient to proceed with the construction of the line.”<sup>42</sup> The true state of affairs came out a year later. Out of the £65,000 so far raised by way of shares and loans, just over £46,000 had been spent since the Company’s formation on 20 January 1845. The heaviest expenditure to date had been £21,731 on the legal and other costs of getting the initial Bill—and the failed attempt to amend it—through Parliament. This sum was ten times the Parliamentary costs of the PRC. A further £8,000 had gone on engineering and surveying, and £7,000 on compensation to landowners.<sup>43</sup> And so, almost three-quarters of the available capital had disappeared without a single yard of track having been laid.

Not surprisingly, there were many unhappy shareholders, and in the belief that matters were unlikely to improve a number of them met in Leeds on 22 June 1849 to discuss the situation.

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<sup>41</sup> Baughan, *op.cit.*, (ref.38) p.51.

<sup>42</sup> *ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, p.54.

The intransigent WR directors refused to meet with these dissident shareholders. At the half-yearly meeting two months later, although some shareholders urged the abandonment of the railway under new regulations agreed by Parliament, the Board successfully urged patience.<sup>44</sup> That patience was never rewarded, and the powers under the Wharfedale Act were eventually allowed to lapse, and the shareholders lost their money.<sup>45</sup> Construction of the line was ultimately begun by a joint effort of the Midland and the NER, from Arthington as far as Ilkley, and this segment was opened in 1865. The remaining section from Ilkley to Skipton was then undertaken by the MR, but was not completed until 1 October 1888, 42 years after the original Act.<sup>46</sup>

The WR was well placed geographically, as it ran through a relatively prosperous agricultural and manufacturing area within easy reach of markets in the populous towns of Leeds and Bradford. The original scheme was abandoned—principally because of the ineptitude of the WR Board—but, had the WR been fortunate enough to have a team of the calibre of the PRC Directors, then the outcome would probably have been very different. However, after the MR and NER finally built the railway through Wharfedale, it had a long and useful life: time has proved the economic justification for the railway. Most of it has survived up to the present, for there are still branches carrying passengers and goods to Ilkley from Leeds and Bradford, and Ilkley is still connected to the main line at Arthington, although the latter no longer possesses a railway station.

And so, in the end, both the M&CR and WR prospered, despite their initial financial problems. They survived because the initial concepts were soundly based—their potential, from the standpoint of economics and geography, was there from the start.

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<sup>44</sup> Baughan, *op.cit.*, (ref.38) p.58.

<sup>45</sup> The Wharfedale Railway scheme was finally laid to rest in 1861. A joint committee from the Midland and North Eastern Railways agreed to build a railway up Wharfedale, as far as Ilkley. The Guisely-Ilkley line of the Midland and the Arthington-Ilkley line of the North Eastern were opened in 1865.

<sup>46</sup> Lewin, *op.cit.*, (ref.39) p.482.

As opposed to financial matters, in the next chapter we will compare operational aspects of the Peebles Railway with those of two other small railway companies. Apart from the quality of its Board of Directors, we shall be looking for any additional factors that gave the PRC an advantage when compared to these other branch railways.

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*Cap. ci.*

An Act for making a Railway from the Town and Port of *Maryport* to the Borough of *Carlisle*, to be called "*The Maryport and Carlisle Railway.*"  
[12th July 1837.]

**W**HEREAS the making of a Railway from the Town and Port of *Maryport* to the Borough of *Carlisle* in the County of *Cumberland*, there to join the *Newcastle-upon-Tyne* and *Carlisle* Railway, would be productive of great Advantages to the Agricultural, Manufacturing, Mining, and Commercial Interests of the said County and the adjoining County of *Northumberland*, and to the Public in general, by affording great additional Facilities for the Transit of Passengers, Merchandize, and Minerals within the said County of *Cumberland*, as well for Home Consumption as for Exportation or Shipment to *Ireland*, *Scotland*, and other Places; and the said Railway would also facilitate the Communication between the Continent of *Europe* and *Ireland* and the Western Coast of *England* by forming, in conjunction with the said *Newcastle-upon-Tyne* and *Carlisle* Railway and the *Brandlings* Junction Railway, One complete and continuous Line of Railway Communication from the *German* Ocean to the *Irish* Sea: And whereas the several Persons herein-after named are willing, at their own Costs and Charges, to carry into execution the said Undertaking; but the same cannot be effected without the Authority of Parliament: May it therefore please Your Majesty that it may be enacted; and be it enacted by the Queen's

[*Local.*]

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Fig.14-1. Preamble to the Maryport & Carlisle Railway Act, 1837.



Fig.14-2. Route of the Maryport & Carlisle Railway.<sup>47</sup> Scale 1 inch = 7 miles

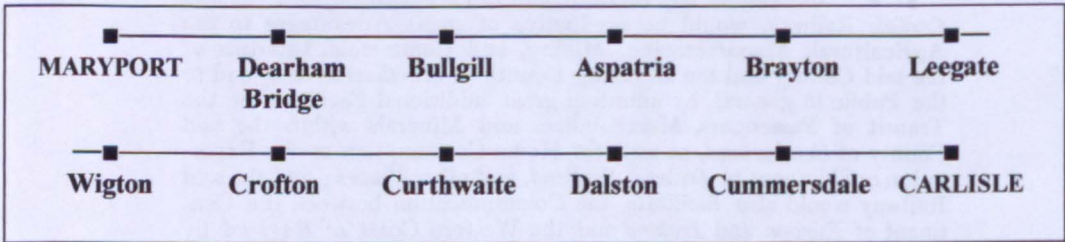


Fig.14-3. Stations on the Maryport & Carlisle Railway.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>47</sup> Fig.14-2 adapted from the Ordnance Survey digital map, fifth edition, 2001.

<sup>48</sup> These were the original stations when the line was completed in February 1845. Several have since been closed. Crofton was a private station for the Brisco family of Crofton Hall.



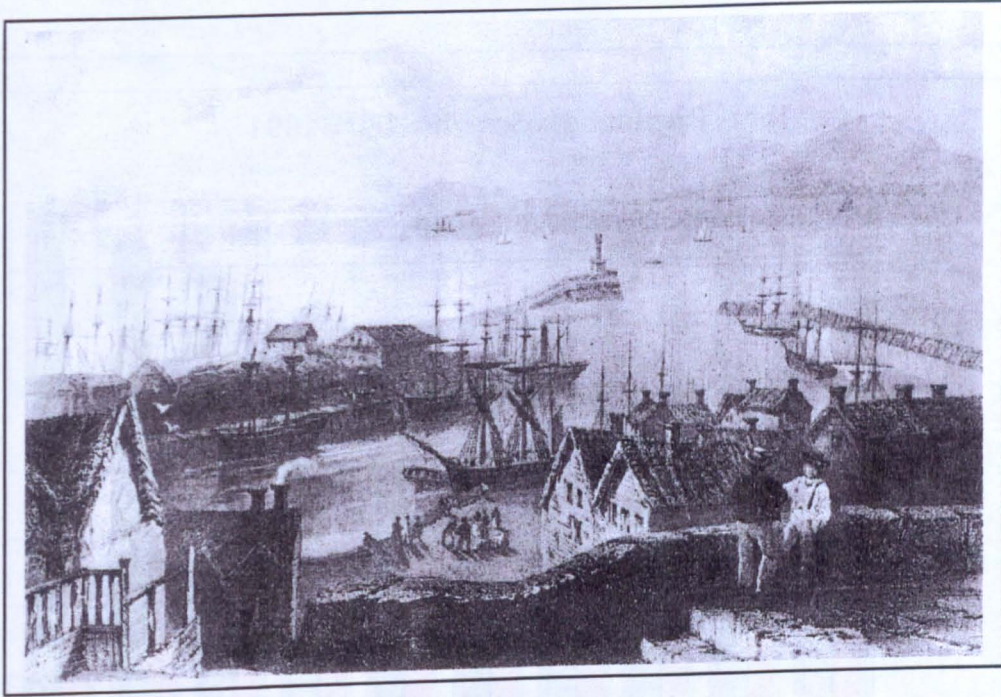


Fig.14-4. The tidal Maryport Harbour in 1837.<sup>49</sup>



Fig.14-5. A wet dock, the 'Elizabeth', was opened in 1857.

<sup>49</sup> The harbour photographs taken from A. Robinson, *Maritime Maryport* (Whitehaven, 1978).



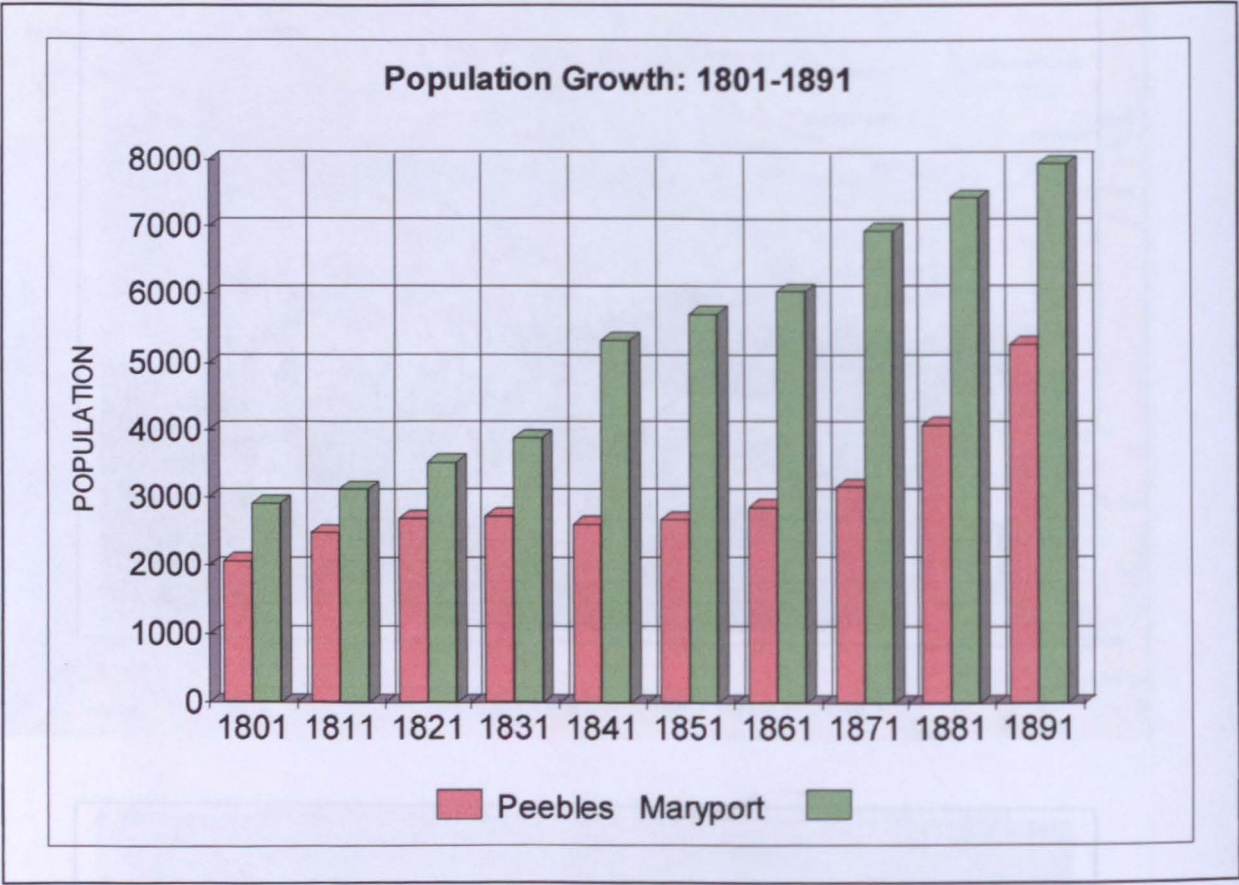


Fig.14-6. Population Growth of Peebles and Maryport, 1801-1891.<sup>50</sup>

<sup>50</sup> The figures for Maryport are those of the ecclesiastical parish of Maryport St Mary, found in the series of Parliamentary Papers dealing with population statistics. They are therefore comparable with the figures for the parish of Peebles, which came from the same source.



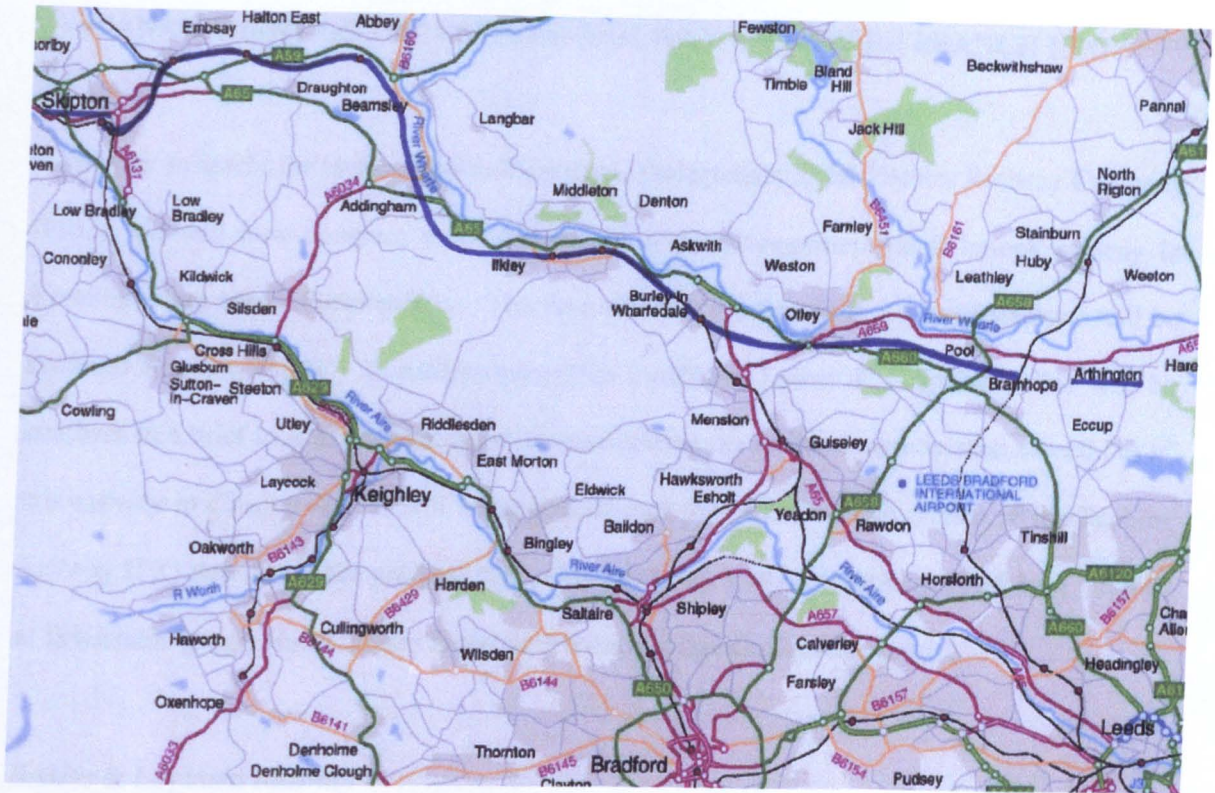


Fig.14-7. The Wharfedale Railway—from Skipton to Arthington.<sup>51</sup> Scale 1 inch = 3 miles

<sup>51</sup> The WR was originally conceived as a feeder for two north-south mainline routes at Skipton and Arthington.



## MANAGEMENT OF THE PEEBLES RAILWAY AND OTHER BRANCH LINES

In order to assess the levels of performance and management of the Peebles Railway Company (PRC), we will now compare them with those of a contemporary small branch railway in Yorkshire, and one in Peeblesshire. The first of these, the Bedale & Leyburn Railway will be analysed in some depth. Consideration of the Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton line will be confined to a brief look at the quality of its management, as we have already seen something of this railway in Chapter 4. It will be suggested that the superior performance of the Peebles Railway (PR) was due to the professionalism and dedication of its Directors, aided by a number of favourable geographical factors found in Peebles and the surrounding district.

### Bedale & Leyburn Railway

The Bedale & Leyburn Railway Company (B&LR) received its Act of Parliament in 1853, within a month of the Peebles Act.<sup>1</sup> The line was to be single track, running from Leeming Bar to Leyburn in Wensleydale, north Yorkshire, a distance of 11.7 miles, or just under two-thirds the length of the PRC (Fig.15-1). The Authorised Capital of £50,000 in £10 shares, and powers to borrow up to £16,000 on mortgage after half the share capital had been paid up,<sup>2</sup> were similar, *pro rata*, to those of the PRC. Like previous efforts to link Peebles with Edinburgh (Chapter 3), there had been earlier attempts to link Bedale and Leyburn with Northallerton, the county town of the North Riding of Yorkshire. The railway history of this area is too complicated to discuss in detail here, as there were a number of competing projects involved before, during and after the Railway Mania of 1845-6. A useful summary of the background can be found in Jenkins.<sup>3</sup>

A start had been made in 1847 to build a 7½-mile, single-line branch from Northallerton to Bedale, under the terms of the Newcastle & Darlington Junction Railway (Bedale branch) Act of

<sup>1</sup> PRC (6 & 17 Vict. c.78) 8/7/1853. B&LR (16 & 17 Vict. c.137) 4/8/1853.

<sup>2</sup> H.W. Parris, 'Northallerton to Hawes: a study in branch line history', *JTH*, 1955-6, Series 2, p.237.

<sup>3</sup> S.C. Jenkins, *The Wensleydale Branch: a new history* (Usk, 2nd edn., 2002) Chapter 1.

26 June 1846. The Newcastle & Darlington Junction was one of the railways under the control of the notorious George Hudson, and the first section from Northallerton to Leeming Bar, almost six miles long, was opened for traffic on 6 March 1848. But, because of Hudson's downfall, other rival railway proposals, and an economic crisis due to failed harvests, Leeming remained the western terminus of this line for a further seven years.<sup>4</sup>

One of the failed railway schemes that would have had a major impact on Wensleydale was the Yorkshire & Glasgow Union Railway proposal of 1845. This line was to run from Thirsk to Penrith—via Bedale, Leyburn and Hawes—where it would join up with the Lancaster & Carlisle Railway to provide an onward route towards Scotland. Among the many local supporters of this scheme were Marmaduke Wyvill, of Burton Hall, Leyburn, and Christopher Other, of Elm House Leyburn.<sup>5</sup> Mr Other was not only an investor in the proposed line, but he was also the Honorary Secretary of the provisional Committee of Management.

On the formation of the B&LR, Other became a member of its Provisional Committee and Wyvill was appointed Chairman. And so, at least two of the Committee members had previous experience of railway promotion, as had the PRC trio of Bathgate, Chambers and Thorburn. Christopher Other later became the B&LR General Manager. The fact that he was also a Director of the Swaledale & Wensleydale Banking Company was of crucial importance to what was a capital-starved B&LR.<sup>6</sup>

A major difference between the B&LR and the PRC is found in their procurement of the necessary capital. The failure of a number of Yorkshire schemes during the Railway Mania had discouraged investors in new projects, with the result that the B&LR Directors were always chronically short of money. They were even forced to borrow £2,000 from the Swaledale &

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<sup>4</sup> Jenkins, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) pp.9-17.

<sup>5</sup> *ibid.*, pp. 10-11.

<sup>6</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.238.

Wensleydale Bank to make up the balance of the required Parliamentary deposit.<sup>7</sup> At the Company's first Ordinary General Meeting held on 11 January 1854, fourteen months after the issue of the prospectus, Wyvill announced that until a further 1,000 shares or more had been subscribed for, the Board could not proceed to place the construction contract.<sup>8</sup> In the meantime, he promised that "the strictest economy in the engineering and surveying departments" would be enforced. A month later, he reported that they had succeeded "in issuing a thousand shares and upwards, principally to the inhabitants of the immediate neighbourhood."<sup>9</sup> In addition, the York, Newcastle & Berwick Railway (which had taken over the Newcastle & Darlington Junction) had promised to contribute £5,000, which was intended to pay for the unfinished 1.7-mile section between Leeming Bar and Bedale. Although Jenkins suggests that this contribution was duly paid, according to Parris the money was never handed over, despite repeated requests from the B&LR Board.<sup>10</sup>

The share promotion aspect was rather different for the PRC. After the prospectus was issued the PRC shares were quickly over-subscribed, a fair proportion being allocated to investors in the south of England. James and John Renton from London and John Todrell from Tunbridge Wells had been responsible for £12,000 out of the initial £19,450 received in share subscriptions.<sup>11</sup> There had been the usual prophets of doom in Peeblesshire, but, mainly due to the energetic canvassing of Walter Thorburn, enough local investors in the railway were obtained to satisfy Parliamentary Standing Orders<sup>12</sup> (Chapter 4 and Appendix 5).

Difficulties arise when trying to compare the Capital Accounts of the two railway companies at the dates when the lines were opened. For example, Parris tells us that 10 per cent of the

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<sup>7</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.238.

<sup>8</sup> Jenkins, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.19.

<sup>9</sup> *ibid.*, p.19.

<sup>10</sup> *ibid.*, p.20. Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.238.

<sup>11</sup> *Railway Times*, 14/5/1853, p.506.

<sup>12</sup> From Thorburn's Obituary notice in the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, 23/2/1867.

contractor's bills and 25 per cent of the invoices from the rail supplier were paid by the B&LR Board in shares, rather than in cash.<sup>13</sup> Again, the B&LR never bought locomotives or rolling stock. From the start it leased the line to the North Eastern Railway (NER), which had been formed in July 1854 by an amalgamation of the York, Newcastle & Berwick, the Leeds Northern, and the York & North Midland railways. However, the following table gives an indication of the capital costs borne by the B&LR<sup>14</sup> and the PRC.<sup>15</sup>

	<b>B&amp;LR</b>	<b>PRC</b>
Parliamentary & Law	£2,616	£2,268
Engineering	£1,618	£2,300
Land & Compensation	£9,026	£17,012
Works and Rails	£41,265	£62,103
Bank Interest, etc.	£1,720	---
General Expenses	<u>£868</u>	<u>£2,476</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£57,113</b>	<b>£86,159</b>

Figures to the nearest £.

Table 15-1. Bedale & Leyburn and Peebles Railway capital cost comparison.

The only items that can be strictly compared are the Parliamentary and engineering costs, and the land and compensation valuations. Both sets of Parliamentary and legal costs were modest, especially those of the PRC, and, given the respective single-track route lengths, the engineering costs were comparable. But, the land costs for the B&LR look suspiciously low at just under half the PRC total. Parris states that the Marquess of Ailesbury received £3,292 for 18 acres of agricultural land, (approximately £180 an acre) most of which had previously been let at an annual rent of only 24s. per acre. At a typical price of 35 years' rental plus 50 per cent for

<sup>13</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.240.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid*, p.239.

<sup>15</sup> *Herapath's Railway Journal*, (*Herapath*) 8/11/1856, p.1157. The PRC locomotives and rolling stock are not included.

compulsory purchase (Chapter 7, p.119), the B&LR should have obtained this land at about £63 per acre—a third of what was actually paid. If this were typical of the whole length of the railway, then “it does not appear that the landowners made any sacrifice in order to get the line built.”<sup>16</sup> One factor that might account for the low B&LR land costs was that it was poorly equipped with sidings, stations, goods sheds and other buildings compared to the PR. The B&LR Board Minutes of 4 March 1857 state that a further £1,000 was to be borrowed “for the purpose of erecting stations, depots and sidings,”<sup>17</sup> but that sum would not have gone very far. Adequate provision of these facilities only came after the amalgamation with the NER in August 1857, and it is quite possible that the NER paid for any extra land required.

The PRC Chairman, Sir Graham Montgomery, reported a comparatively favourable land situation at the first General Meeting on 23 August 1853. “The leading landowners on the line had offered every encouragement, by agreeing to give the lands required at thirty-five years’ purchase of the agricultural value—the valuation and severance damage being fixed by arbitration.”<sup>18</sup> The most the PRC ever seems to have paid was £245 an acre, and that was an isolated case—possibly to avoid legal costs—where the owner was an objector to the railway, and had registered a ‘Dissent’ (Chapter 7, p.128). I found no evidence that the PRC Directors—who owned 57 out of the 104 acres required (pp.126-7)—asked for severance or compulsory-purchase premiums. One Director sold just over three acres for as little as £58 an acre. However, in the PRC prospectus, only £14,800 had been allocated to cover the purchase of land, engineering, Parliamentary and all other expenses,<sup>19</sup> which sum was ultimately exceeded by over 50 per cent: a very common phenomenon in railway promotion at the time. Most of this excess was due to the cost of land, which was higher than the original optimistic estimate.

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<sup>16</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.240.

<sup>17</sup> *ibid.*, p.241.

<sup>18</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (*P.Adv.*) 1/9/1853.

<sup>19</sup> *ibid.*, 4/5/1852.

We are not told whether the B&LR works and rails item in Table 15-1 took into account the five or six hundred shares taken by the contractors in lieu of cash. On the other hand, the PR figure in the table did not include the cost of some of the almost 2½ miles of sidings, provided in addition to the 19 route miles between Peebles and Eskbank. "Since the opening of the line, extensive sidings, not originally contemplated, have been laid at various places, in order to accommodate the demands of the district."<sup>20</sup> However, according to the PRC Minutes, at least three of these sidings were put in at the expense of factory or colliery owners.

The totals in Table 15-1 are therefore less than the final costs. The actual total for the B&LR was £63,650—compared to the £66,000 provided for in its Act of Parliament—or approximately £5,400 a mile.<sup>21</sup> But, instead of having £50,000 in share capital and the balance by way of mortgages as provided by the Act, only £31,650 was in paid-up shares while £32,000 was in bank loans. The result was that the B&LR never paid any dividends during its short independent existence, since almost all of any surplus revenue was swallowed up by bank interest payments (see Table 15-2). In addition, in order to carry out the amalgamation, the B&LR Board were obliged to increase the Share Capital from £50,000 to £60,000 in 1857.<sup>22</sup> By the time the NER had completed the B&LR with the necessary stations and platforms, depots and sidings, the £5,400 a mile cost noted earlier had risen to between £7,000 and £8,000 per mile.<sup>23</sup>

Unlike the B&LR, the PRC paid dividends from the outset. The Board obtained a further Act of Parliament to permit the purchase of extra locomotives and rolling stock, so that the final PRC capital stood at £129,000 (Chapter 4, p.60). Despite the fact that the Peebles Railway was built over more difficult terrain, its Works and Rail costs (Table 15-1) were over 7 per cent per mile cheaper than the B&LR costs. A further difference was that PRC Board stocked and worked the

<sup>20</sup> *Herapath, op.cit.*, (ref.15) 8/11/1856 p.1157. From the half-yearly PRC Report, October 1856.

<sup>21</sup> *Parris, op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.239.

<sup>22</sup> Act of Parliament 20 & 21 Vict. c.10.

<sup>23</sup> *Parris, op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.241. Evidence of O'Brien, the NER General Manager, against the Skipton, Wharfedale & Leyburn Junction Railway Bill, under consideration by the Commons, 17 May 1865.



fully-completed railway until the NBR leasing agreement of 1861, whereas the B&LR was leased and worked by the NER from the outset.

The Board of Trade (BoT) Inspector, Lt. Col. Wynne RE, found a major problem during his inspection of the short Leeming Bar to Bedale section of the B&LR on 26 January 1855. He considered that the operational procedures proposed by the NER for working this section were potentially dangerous. Although he was happy with the construction aspect, he refused to pass the line for passenger traffic because it would be theoretically possible “to work more than one train on the line at the same time.”<sup>24</sup> The NER grudgingly changed its procedures, and the section was brought into use a few days later.

The rest of the line from Bedale to Leyburn was first inspected in October 1855, but “various deficiencies were found, of which the most serious was the lack of turntables.”<sup>25</sup> Unless turntables were available, the Railway Department of the BoT required passenger trains on single lines to be worked by tank engines. As well as causing excessive wear and tear on the track, it was considered unsafe to run engines tender first on passenger trains. Since the NER would not give an undertaking to use tank engines, permission to open the section was refused. Turntables were eventually installed at Leyburn and Northallerton, and the complete line of 17½ miles was opened for passenger traffic on 19 May 1856, with four trains daily in each direction. “Opening Day was celebrated in appropriate style by the inhabitants of Leyburn and the surrounding district.”<sup>26</sup> Goods trains had been running since 24 November 1855, but meanwhile, much-needed passenger revenue had been lost to the Company.

The experience of the PRC with regard to its railway inspection was better, although there was an unexpected last-minute hitch. On 28 June 1855, Capt. Tyler RE of the BoT inspected the line

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<sup>24</sup> Jenkins, *op.cit.* (ref.3) pp.20-1.

<sup>25</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.240.

<sup>26</sup> Jenkins, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.23.

and passed it fit to begin operations.<sup>27</sup> As it had not yet installed turntables, the PRC had avoided the B&LR problem by buying two tank engines to haul its passenger trains. However, we saw in Chapter 5 that the BoT approval letter dated 2nd July contained the unacceptable provision that only one engine 'in steam' was to be allowed on the line at any one time. The PRC Board quickly managed to have this decision reversed by splitting the line into two sections with a half way passing point. The BoT now agreed that there could be a train in each section, suggesting that the PRC should employ pilotmen to ensure safe single-line working.<sup>28</sup> Quietly and without ceremony, the PR began operations on 4 July 1855, with the first of three passenger trains daily to and from Edinburgh.

	<b>B&amp;LR</b>	<b>PR</b>
Traffic Receipts	£5,338	£9,938
Working Expenses	£3,805	£5,509
Expenses as % of Income	71	56
Bank and Land Interest paid	£1,341	NIL
Net Profit	£242	£3,764
Ordinary Dividends	NIL	2.25%
Figures to the nearest £.		

Table 15-2. B&LR and PR operating statistics for 1857.

As the B&LR only had a short independent life, revenue and expense data are scarce. However, Parris gives some details in an income and expenditure account for 1857.<sup>29</sup> These are compared in Table 15-2 with the PR figures for the same year, which were published in the *Advertiser*.<sup>30</sup> It was some time later in the NER era that the traffic receipts of the B&LR reached satisfactory levels. It would appear from O'Brien's 1865 evidence to Parliament (see note 23)

<sup>27</sup> *Herapath, op.cit.*, (ref.15) 20/10/1855. p.1067.

<sup>28</sup> J.L. Brown and I.C. Lawson, (eds.) *History of Peebles*. (Edinburgh, 1990) p.326.

<sup>29</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.242.

<sup>30</sup> *P.Adv.*, *op.cit.*, (ref.18) 1/11/1857.

that the line was now earning £10-£12 per mile per week, with working expenses probably in the region of 50 per cent. "Taking £11 as the average, this makes an annual revenue of £6,864, and an estimated gross profit of £3,432, more than enough to pay the 3 per cent guaranteed dividend on the capital at the time of amalgamation."<sup>31</sup> This level of income was considered quite satisfactory for a country branch line. However, in 1865, the PR—by then under lease to the NBR—was not only earning almost £17 per mile per week, but was also making a net profit for the PRC of £6,176 (Appendix 1), allowing an ordinary dividend of 6¼ per cent to be paid.<sup>32</sup>

Although it had been the intention of both Boards to lease the railways to larger companies, the PRC Directors had decided to run their line themselves after they were offered unacceptable terms by the NBR. They managed it successfully because the Directors knew the district and their customers intimately, and, as we saw in Chapter 11, took a flexible attitude towards rules and regulations. They were prepared to listen to their clients, and to make changes to services or tariffs in the light of suggestions or complaints. A small but telling example of this occurred on the day following the opening, when two fishwives arrived in Peebles from Musselburgh. Their baskets were quickly sold out, since Peebles had never before had a source of fresh sea fish. The fishwives had paid 4s. for the return trip from Edinburgh, and when asked if they would come back, they said they would if the fare were reduced. A PRC Director was within earshot, and he reduced their fare to 2s.6d. on the spot.<sup>33</sup>

Although the line was leased by the NBR from 1861, the PRC was always a profitable independent company. The Directors could boast that from 1856 until 1876 they had never failed to pay a dividend (see Appendix 1). Unlike the Maryport & Carlisle Directors, the PRC Board had agreed from the outset to close the Capital Account as soon as possible. This meant

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<sup>31</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.243.

<sup>32</sup> *P.Adv.,op.cit.*,(ref.18) 14/10/1865 and 24/3/1866. PRC Half-year Reports.

<sup>33</sup> *ibid.*, 1/8/1855. It was the Editor's housekeeper who had questioned the women. The return fare for fishwives was later confirmed at 3s. during a PRC Board Meeting on 4/1/1856.

that when rails and rolling stock were worn-out, the replacements would be charged to revenue. Charging them to capital was “a very common and fatal error of railway companies: when the plant was worn out the capital was gone, while the original cost remained a perpetual charge against the company.”<sup>34</sup> “In remarkably few cases have railway companies been able, or been disposed, to close their Capital Account.”<sup>35</sup> Although Chambers said that by doing so, PRC dividends were restricted in the early years before traffic had built up, nevertheless “it proved a just and wise policy, and to it be imputed much of the success of the company financially.”<sup>36</sup> However, with the Capital Account closed, the Board could not raise the necessary sum when it became desirable to convert part of the PR line to double track. This was one of the reasons for accepting the NBR leasing arrangement of 1861.

This prudent management did not please every railway speculator, as confirmed by a letter to the Editor of *Herapath* signed ‘A Shareholder’, after the announcement of the PRC’s half-year dividend of 2½ per cent in October 1857. “Like yourself, I once thought favourably of the Peebles railway: experience has since proved that, like other Scotch railways, it has been made only to accommodate Scotland and Scotchmen.”<sup>37</sup>

There is no evidence that the B&LR Board ever considered running the line themselves. Once the railway had been brought to the district, it seems that the local Directors saw no need to continue their direct involvement in the scheme.<sup>38</sup> Indeed, by the end of 1856, they were already negotiating with the NER with a view to amalgamation.<sup>39</sup> At the B&LR half-yearly Meeting on 4 February 1857, Marmaduke Wyvill strongly supported a takeover by the NER, a move that was rejected by the shareholders by 603 to 439 votes.<sup>40</sup> This decision was reversed at the

<sup>34</sup> *Railway Times*, 14/10 1876, p.934. Chairman’s statement at the last Shareholders Meeting, 7/10/1876.

<sup>35</sup> W. Chambers, *About Railways*. (Edinburgh, 1866) p.20.

<sup>36</sup> *Railway Times*, 14/10/1876, p.934.

<sup>37</sup> *Herapath, op.cit.*, (ref.15) 24/10/1857, p.1106.

<sup>38</sup> Jenkins, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.24.

<sup>39</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.242.

<sup>40</sup> Jenkins, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.24.

Wharnccliffe Meeting held on 19 August, 1857, by which time the proprietors were happy to sell their railway in return for guaranteed dividends from the NER.

The terms of the NER-B&LR amalgamation were generous. In addition to taking over the bank debts, the NER offered the B&LR shareholders dividends of 3 per cent for the first two years, 3½ per cent for the next two years, and then 4 per cent in perpetuity.<sup>41</sup> For a railway that had no immediate prospects of paying dividends this was a very satisfactory outcome. But, why did the NER agree to such generous terms? According to Parris, the answer may be found in the B&LR Board Minutes of 18 February and 25 March 1857, which record the intervention of the Stockton & Darlington Railway in the amalgamation talks.<sup>42</sup> It was doubtless in defence of what it considered to be its own territory that the NER quickly negotiated terms with the B&LR. Moreover, the NER was possibly thinking about a future westward extension of the line, with limestone from the quarry at Redmire (see Fig.15-1) and agricultural produce from Upper Wensleydale, to provide additional goods traffic in addition to passenger revenues. However, it was a further 20 years before this became a reality. The railway was ultimately completed as far as Hawes, where it joined the Midland Railway's Settle to Carlisle main line.

We can now compare the B&LR outcome with the equally satisfactory lease of the PRC in 1861, and the ultimate amalgamation with the NBR in 1876. When the NBR had first attempted to take over the PRC in 1860, it had offered a guaranteed dividend of 3½ per cent, rising to 4 per cent in perpetuity after three years—very similar to the B&LR deal with the NER. The PRC Board was split, and after the Wharnccliffe Meeting failed to find a sufficient majority in favour of the proposal, the Chairman and three other Directors felt obliged to resign (Chapter 4). William Chambers then became Chairman, happily without any rancour between himself and his predecessor. The ensuing leasing agreement of 1861 worked well for both companies, and when

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<sup>41</sup> Jenkins, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) p.24.

<sup>42</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2) p.243.

the PRC Board finally agreed to the amalgamation which took place on 1 August 1876, they received a guaranteed dividend of 8 per cent on the ordinary shares and 5 per cent on the preference shares.<sup>43</sup> During the period of the lease, the gross revenues were split equally between the NBR and the PRC, with the former paying for the working and maintenance of the line and the necessary Act of Parliament, and the latter responsible for local taxes and passenger duty.<sup>44</sup> The PRC was also paid £20,000 for its engines and rolling stock, thereby reducing the £129,000 Capital Account by this amount. We cannot compare this leasing agreement with that of the NER and B&LR, as details of their arrangements do not seem to have survived.<sup>45</sup> But, eventually, both railways finished up with very satisfactory financial settlements.

In terms of economic geography, the main advantage possessed by the PR was that it began in a county town, Peebles, and was connected to the capital city of Edinburgh. The town was situated in beautiful countryside, which was opened up to holidaymakers and visitors for the first time with the arrival of the railway. Trout and salmon fishermen, attracted by the River Tweed and its tributaries around Peebles, made a small but interesting example of such visitors. In season, they were a regular feature on the early morning trains from Edinburgh. However, it was not just the influx of tourists, for the Burgh began to attract affluent new residents who wished to live or retire in a small and attractive country town, but who also required easy access to Edinburgh and Glasgow. The shortage of suitable land for new factories in the principal Border woollen towns, coupled with the availability of plentiful supplies of water in Peebles for textile processing, almost inevitably meant that woollen mills would follow, once supplies of coal could be delivered cheaply.

Although not so favourably placed geographically as the Peebles Railway, nevertheless the B&LR connected Leyburn and the prosperous agricultural area of Wensleydale with the county

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<sup>43</sup> Brown and Lawson, *op.cit.*, (ref.28) p.334.

<sup>44</sup> *P.Adv.,op.cit.*, (ref.18) 2/2/1861.

<sup>45</sup> Parris, *op.cit.*, (ref.2)..p.241.

town of Northallerton and the main East Coast railway route between London and Scotland. Once the line had been extended to Redmire, the vast deposits of limestone there provided an important freight business for more than a hundred years. The stone was principally destined for the steel works of Teeside. The B&LR also profited by carrying men and munitions to and from the nearby Catterick headquarters of the Army in northern England. The branch is still open as far as Redmire for the Ministry of Defence, and is shared with the Wensleydale Railway PLC, a railway preservation society.<sup>46</sup>

We have seen that the B&LR Directors usually took a more passive role than the PRC Board, both before and after their line was up and running. Their main contribution was to keep the B&LR project alive in the face of great difficulties in raising the necessary capital, at some considerable financial risk to themselves. Compared with the PRC, there seems to have been little interest in the Bedale & Leyburn from the great railway investment centres of London, Liverpool and Manchester, where a lot of money had already been lost on failed schemes such as the original Wharfedale Railway in North Yorkshire. Once the B&LR opened, it seems that the main interest of the Board was to sell it as quickly as possible. It is noteworthy that the various objections of the BoT inspector, Lt. Col. Wynne, were not addressed to the B&LR Directors, but to Thomas Harrison, the current NER General Manager.<sup>47</sup>

### **Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway**

We noted in Chapter 4 the considerable role played by John Bathgate in the promotion of the Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway (LL&DR), and we will now consider what became of the railway after Bathgate resigned and emigrated to New Zealand. The single LL&DR Minute Book reveals that the Board of Directors consisted of local landowners, only one of whom was a 'professional gentleman'.<sup>48</sup> There were no PRC Directors on the LL&DR Board, although a

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<sup>46</sup> Jenkins, *op.cit.*, (ref.3) pp. 181-2.

<sup>47</sup> *ibid.*, pp.20-22.

<sup>48</sup> This was the solicitor, John Forrester, a member of the West Linton Parochial Board. (Chap.12, p.211).

number of them were shareholders in the Company. The line did not terminate in or pass through any towns, but its traffic was firmly oriented towards Edinburgh as it joined the PR at Leadburn. The impression one gains from the Minute Book is that while the Directors were very keen to establish a railway in their area, like the B&LR Board they lost interest once it had opened. Even during the promotion stage—which took place at the time of another Railway Mania in the 1860s—they only succeeded in disposing of half the shares, and had to rely on a bank loan to complete their line.

At no time had the Directors considered working the line themselves, and they leased their railway to the NBR who ran it for 50 per cent of the net revenue after payment of taxes.<sup>49</sup> A Board Minute of 24 October 1863 reveals that the Chairman and another Director “agreed to dispense with any remuneration until the company was in a position to pay a Dividend,” and the other Board members probably followed suit.

Less than five months after the start of operations, the Directors “unanimously resolved that it be remitted to the Chairman, Mr McIntosh and Mr Forrester with full powers to enter into an agreement with the North British Railway Coy. on behalf of this Company with a view to the proposed amalgamation.”<sup>50</sup> The Minute Book reveals that the LL&DR revenue in its year of independent existence was only £2 17s. per mile per week instead of the forecast £7, and there was no money to pay the interest on the bank loan, let alone any dividend. It is interesting to speculate whether this rather sad state of affairs would have occurred if Chambers or Thorburn had been Directors, or if the energetic Bathgate had remained as Secretary.

The NBR was therefore able to strike a hard bargain, and Hodgson’s original promise of a guaranteed four per cent on the LL&DR capital was conveniently forgotten. In return for

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<sup>49</sup> These terms appear to be better than those of the PRC lease, since passenger duty and local taxes were paid from the PRC’s 50% of the revenue.

<sup>50</sup> LL&DR Minute Book, 22/11/1864. (NAS/BR/LLD/1/2).



clearing the LL&DR debts, the NBR agreed to pay dividends on the shares at the same rate as those paid to NBR shareholders. These terms were approved by the LL&DR shareholders at a Wharncliffe Meeting held on 15 June 1866, and the NBR took over the following month. The amalgamation brought no guaranteed returns to the LL&DR shareholders, and dividends were non-existent or poor over the next decade when compared with those of the PRC. This was a period when the NBR was in severe financial difficulties.<sup>51</sup> Apart from keeping the Caledonian Railway at bay, the attraction of the LL&DR to the NBR had been the ability to raise money in the future by disposing of the rest of the LL&DR shares, and by invoking the borrowing powers conferred by the 1862 LL&DR Act.

Geographically, the LL&DR served an area containing only four villages, and there was little prospect of developing any industry except for quarrying and coal mining. With an unenthusiastic Board of Directors and lacking a sizeable town, it is not surprising that the railway failed to develop substantial passenger traffic, either from the local inhabitants or from tourists. Although running through pleasant countryside, it could not match the scenery of Tweeddale, which also had the invaluable associations with Sir Walter Scott in its favour.

### **The Peebles Railway**

Apart from the Maryport & Carlisle Railway with its coal, iron and agricultural traffic, the Peebles Railway was better situated geographically than the other branch lines we have considered, and it was the best managed. The PRC Directors, who gave their services without payment for many years, were actively involved in the economical management of their railway, both before and after the 1861 leasing agreement with the NBR.<sup>52</sup> According to an editorial in the *Peeblesshire Advertiser* on 4 October 1862, the Directors found "a sufficient reward in the

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<sup>51</sup> *Railway Times* 16/3/1872. The *Railway Times* commented on the NBR financial situation as follows. "For several years no return whatever has been received by ordinary shareholders. What was available for dividends went to preference shareholders, who were not always paid in full."

<sup>52</sup> *Herapath, op.cit.*, (ref.15) 22/4/1854, p.416. "One of the items of savings in other quarters is the gratuitous services of the Directors."

pleasure of promoting the interests of the line, which are identified with the interests of the county.” One Board member, William Chambers, as well as being a progenitor of the Peebles Railway, served without a break for all 23 years of its corporate existence. He and Thorburn had the entrepreneurial experience in business that was lacking in the management of the other lines.

Commenting on the 1861 lease, *Herapath*’s opinion was that “by retaining their corporate powers, the Company will be in a position at all times to make their rights effectual.”<sup>53</sup> It is clear from the half-yearly meetings that followed the leasing agreement that the Board were quick to put pressure on the NBR if they saw anything amiss.<sup>54</sup> There are a number of letters of complaint from the PRC Board in the NBR Minute Books, about such matters as late trains or poorly maintained stations. And, ultimately, Chambers was able to negotiate a very satisfactory amalgamation agreement in 1876, when there were no approaches from a rival company—as with the B&LR situation—to pressure the NBR into being generous.

Writing about the Peebles Railway in 1855, *Herapath* remarked that “its affairs appear to be very nicely and ably managed,”<sup>55</sup> while Bathgate paid the following fulsome compliment to the Board in 1862. He attributed much of the success of the PRC to “as pure-minded and clean-handed a body of directors as ever sat round a board table.”<sup>56</sup> Finally, there was another independent tribute to the management of the Peebles Railway. The *Railway News* reported that the French Ministry of Agriculture, Commerce and Public Works had instituted a Commission of Enquiry in 1861, into the ‘Cheap Railway Movement’ in Britain.<sup>57</sup> The Ministry had been alerted by a report, ‘Les Chemins de Fer à bon Marché’, by a former Chief Engineer of the Western Railway system of France, M. Bergeron.

<sup>53</sup> *Herapath, op.cit.*, (ref.15) 19/1/1861, pp. 64-5.

<sup>54</sup> These meetings were faithfully reported by the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*.

<sup>55</sup> *Herapath, op.cit.*, (ref.15) 28/4/1855, p.440.

<sup>56</sup> *P.Adv., op.cit.*, (ref.18) 20/12/1862. Bathgate’s speech at his testimonial dinner.

<sup>57</sup> *Railway News* 2/1/1864 pp.4-5. *Enquête sur l’Exploitation et la Construction des Chemins de Fer*.

Bergeron spent almost two months in Scotland in 1860, partly on holiday, and partly to make inquiries into the construction and working of the cheap Scottish railways, of which some vague accounts had reached him in France. His visit took place just before the NBR lease of the PR in 1861. The *Railway News* carried a further article in its issue of 16 January 1864, 'Cheap Railways—the Peebles Line', which summarised the Bergeron report. "In the summer of 1860 while making a tour in Scotland, I had occasion to notice a number of lines constructed and worked with very great economy."<sup>58</sup> One, in particular, caught his attention, the Peebles Railway, whose capital cost and working arrangements were held up by Bergeron as an example to be followed "by the inhabitants of districts similarly situated." We have already noted (Chapter 5, pp.81-2) the particular aspects he picked out for praise.

In an editorial on 23 January 1864, the Editor of the *Advertiser* commenting on Bergeron's assessment of the quality of the PRC management wrote—"It must be very pleasing for the directors of the Peebles Railway to read this eulogium." The PRC management style was perfectly expressed by John Thomas.

**The Peebles Railway served the community well and prospered.  
The directors knew the district and everybody of importance in  
it, tailoring the services to meet their patrons' requirements.**<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> *Railway News*, 16/1/1864 pp.52-3.

<sup>59</sup> J. Thomas, *Forgotten Railways: Scotland* (Newton Abbot, 1981) p.35.

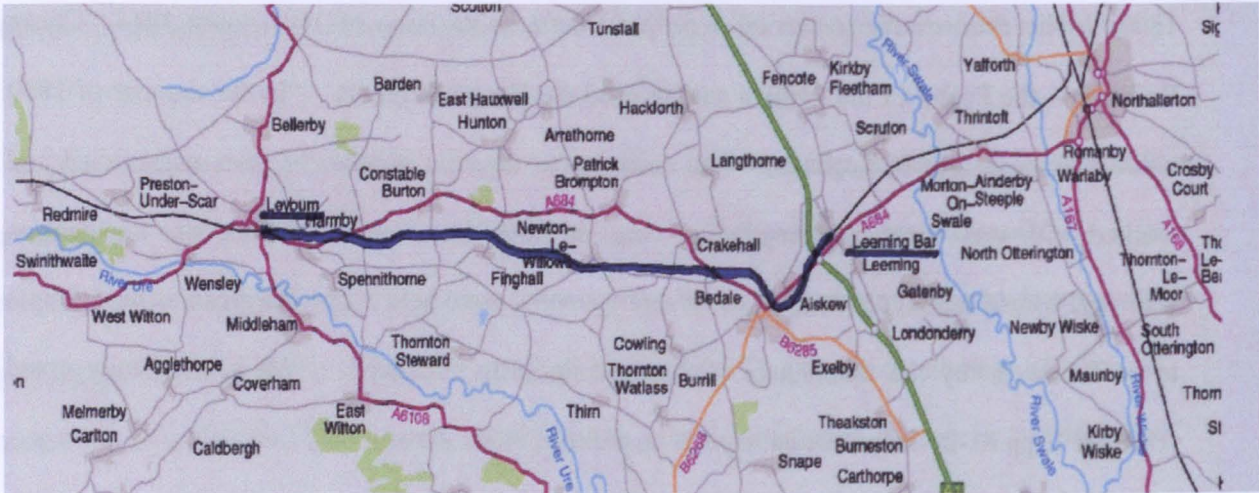


Fig.15-1. The Bedale & Leyburn Railway and the surrounding district.<sup>60</sup> Scale 1 inch = 3.5 miles

<sup>60</sup> Fig.15-1 has been adapted from the Ordnance Survey digital map, 1999-2000.

## SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

**It is hard to find an aspect of Scottish life in the second half of the nineteenth century that was not affected or changed by the railways.<sup>1</sup>**

### Introduction

This chapter begins by confirming that ‘moribund’ in the thesis title is a fair description of the state of Peebles during the first half of the nineteenth century. After discussing the promotion and operation of the Peebles Railway (PR), there follows a summary of the effects of the railway on the burgh and the county. This attempt to cover what the railway actually did for the district has avoided a gap that—according to Simmons—is often found in accounts of Victorian railways. The contingency of the cheap railway movement, improved farm prices, low interest rates, and the involvement of “men of light and leading in the old burgh,”<sup>2</sup> allowed the technology employed by the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) and its management style to be socially shaped to suit the local community. We then consider the new themes introduced in this thesis and the findings of the comparative chapters. These findings were also “modified by conditions peculiar to the place and its people, no less than by the railways serving them.”<sup>3</sup>

### Peebles before the railway

The primary sources are united in portraying Peebles as a backwater, and lacking in enterprise for much of the first half of the nineteenth century. We saw this from Lord Brougham’s “quiet as the grave” (Chapter 2, p.19); Robert Chambers’ “a finished town” (p.22); Fullarton’s “at present the town cannot boast of any staple manufacture” (p.26); Bathgate’s “since the burgh had woken up from its long sleep” (Chapter 4, p.102); and the contention of the New Statistical Account that the Peebles population was smaller than it had been before the Reformation (p.22). As William Chambers revealed in his *History of Peeblesshire*, Peebles was burdened by debt

<sup>1</sup> A.J. Durie and R. Mellor, *George Washington Wilson and the Scottish Railways* (Aberdeen, 1983) p.8.

<sup>2</sup> Rev. A. Williamson *Glimpses of Old Peebles* (Selkirk, 1895) p.217.

<sup>3</sup> J. Simmons, *The Railway in Town and Country: 1830-1914* (Newton Abbot, 1986) p.16.

incurred by generations of self-serving town councillors, who had squandered much of the town's inheritance of lands that had been gifted by earlier Scottish kings. W.& A.K. Johnston's Map of 1847 (Chapter 2, p.36) clearly shows that there had been virtually no changes in the physical size of the Burgh in the quarter of a century since the appearance of John Wood's town plan (p.35). In terms of population, by 1850 other towns in the Borders such as Hawick and Selkirk had left Peebles far behind. As regards manufacturing and trade, the statement in Pigot's 1837 Directory that "Peebles takes a station inferior to many towns of less magnitude, and not so happily favoured by situation"<sup>4</sup> was still the position according to Slater's Directories of 1852 and 1867.

The first serious attempt to link Peebles with Edinburgh by rail was in 1845, and it failed because of the collapse of the Railway Mania and the fact that the promoters could not raise more than a fifth of the required capital from local sources. Despite the bias of the witness, there seems to have been more than a grain of truth in Chambers' declaration that Peebles was "a place which has been long listless and without faith in the future" and which really only came to life with the arrival of the railway.<sup>5</sup> But, notwithstanding this assertion by Chambers, there were several harbingers of progress in the town, well before the first train left for Edinburgh on Wednesday, 4 July 1855.

Peebles fell into the category of Scottish towns that were "local capitals in historic sites which performed marketing and service functions for their immediate neighbourhoods."<sup>6</sup> However, until 1825 two of the important functions—banking and a reliable public transport link with Edinburgh—were missing, and they were to be filled by external agencies. The opening of the British Linen Bank and Croall's daily stagecoach service to and from the metropolis could be said to have marked the beginning of the renaissance of Peebles. Within a few years we saw the effects of a rejuvenated Town Council, which included a thrusting entrepreneur, Walter

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<sup>4</sup> *Pigot & Co's National and Commercial Directory* (Edinburgh, 1837) p.659.

<sup>5</sup> W. Chambers, *History of Peeblesshire* (Edinburgh, 1864) p.295.

<sup>6</sup> T.M. Devine, *The Scottish Nation: 1700-2000* (London, 1999) p.159.

Thorburn. Now there were streets lit by gas from a local company, water newly-piped to the town wells, and a weir across the River Tweed ready to provide waterpower for any textile or paper manufacturer who could be persuaded to set up in Peebles. In the mid-1830s, a young lawyer, John Bathgate, began a successful career at the heart of the town's affairs, while Peebles-born William and Robert Chambers were building a lucrative publishing empire in Edinburgh.

After the brothers were made Freemen of the Royal Burgh of Peebles in 1840, they began to plan the series of civic improvements described in Chapter 2 (p.28). This effort was led by William, who had the backing of his friends John Bathgate and Walter Thorburn, together with Provost John Stirling and his brother Robert, the Burgh Treasurer. "Intelligent minds are exerted in improving and adapting it [Peebles] to the wants and usages of modern society."<sup>7</sup>

### **Promotion of the Peebles Railway**

An important 'want' was the provision of a railway link with Edinburgh to replace the outmoded stagecoach service, and we saw in Chapter 4 how the PRC was conceived and promoted. There was another key factor—absent from the promotion of the Edinburgh & Peebles Railway in the early 1840s (Chapter 3)—which helped the PRC to obtain the necessary local financial support in 1852-3. "The period from 1846 to 1873 was one of general prosperity for Scottish agriculture,"<sup>8</sup> so that landowners in Peeblesshire probably had more money available for investment. They could see from the experience of other branch lines, how a railway was likely to increase the value of their estates. A subsequent example of this is that of Sir Adam Hay and the exploitation of his woods (Chapter 5, p.83).

The part played by John Bathgate in both the PRC and in the Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway gives some idea of what the lawyer was required to do in the creation of a small,

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<sup>7</sup> W. Chambers, *Peebles and its Neighbourhood with a Run on Peebles Railway* (Edinburgh, 1856) p.70.

<sup>8</sup> W.C. Dickinson and G.S. Pryde, *Scotland from 1603 to the present day* (London, 1962) p.226.

country branch line. According to Kellett, consideration of the role of the entrepreneurial solicitor was a theme missing from the literature.<sup>9</sup> Aided by a Parliamentary Agent, Bathgate had to overcome the barrier posed by the Standing Orders of Parliament (Appendix 5). Of course, the problems encountered when promoting a large undertaking such as the Caledonian Railway were of a different order: it was impossible for the solicitor of a large company to get to know and negotiate with all the landowners along the proposed route as Bathgate had done.

Ownership of the land and the cost of its acquisition were the central questions in Kellett's study, and his conclusion that these were probably the vital factors in the successful promotion and construction of a Victorian railway is exemplified by the PRC. The land acquired by the PRC cost £17,012, a sum which Bouch thought was about a quarter of the price he would expect to pay for enough land to build a single line 19 miles in length. Fortunately for the Company, its Directors owned much of the required land and they sold it at favourable prices. The sizes of the parcels of land acquired along the line, and the names of their previous owners, were obtained from the Book of Reference required by Parliament in the formal application for a private Act, and will be found in Chapter 7 (p.127). Land in Midlothian proved to be rather more expensive than that of Peeblesshire, but it was still comparatively cheap, thanks to the negotiating ability of Bathgate (Chapter 4, p.58). Also crucial to keeping PR construction costs low was Bouch's economical use of land: he only required about half the amount that Kellett and Simmons suggested was usual for country branch lines before the Bouch era.

### **What did the railways do for Peebles and district?**

The arrival of the PR had little effect upon the old central core of Peebles, since, in order to minimise costs, the terminus and sidings were built in the landward area of the Parish, close to, but not in the town itself.<sup>10</sup> When the Caledonian Railway (CR) and the North British Railway

<sup>9</sup> J.R. Kellett, *The Impact of Railways on Victorian Cities* (London, 1969) p.423.

<sup>10</sup> This was a feature of Bouch Railways—the stations at St Andrews and Crieff were also built on the edge of town. This contrasts with the town centre locations in Kellett's Victorian cities.



(NBR) arrived, they too avoided the built-up core of Peebles. The CR terminus, goods depot, sidings, engine shed and turntable were situated on the south bank of the River Tweed on land outside the town proper (Fig.8-1, p.142). The Town Council refused to allow a railway to cross the middle of the Northgate, with the result that the NBR line from Galashiels ran close to the upper limit of deviation shown in Figure 7-1 (p.131). The new NBR station and sidings were built behind the Northgate on what had been market gardens in Dean's Park (Fig.2-2, p.36).

Despite representations from the Town Council and the PRC, the Caledonian refused to share a station with the NBR, and the same attitude was repeated later in the small village of Dolphinton. It was this aspect of the competition between the two companies that mainly affected Peebles. The half-mile gap between the two stations in Peebles was a source of annoyance to passengers wishing to transfer from one line to the other. To some extent this was offset for Peebleans <sup>11</sup> by the continuing NBR-CR rivalry, since the cut-throat competition meant that neither company could risk relaxing the standards of service offered to the townspeople.

Kellett asked how the provision of railway services linked up with the promotion of suburban building. In Peebles this was largely indirect, brought about by the inward carriage of relatively cheap building materials that made a difference to the appearance of the town. Welsh tiles were used on new buildings and replaced thatched roofs in the Old Town, banned because of fire risk, while sandstone began to supplant whinstone in new public buildings like the Sheriff Courthouse and the new Parish Church. Affordable building materials and the offer of building tickets by the PRC (see Chapter 11) prompted the construction of the new middle-class suburb of Springhill, south of the River Tweed (Fig.11-7, p.198). A few large sandstone houses also appeared on the eastern outskirts of the town. But the smaller working-class houses north of the High Street continued to be built of the familiar greywacke, thus becoming a visible sign of class distinction. Despite the large number of worked-out quarries surrounding the town, local

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<sup>11</sup> Inhabitants of Peebles and district are known as Peebleans.

builders still had access to supplies of whinstone. The River Tweed separated the middle-class suburb of Springhill (with Frankscroft) from the working-class areas to the north of the river, as the Great Eastern Railway divided Ilford (Fig. 11-8, p.199). The promoters of the Hydropathic located it in Peebles rather than in Innerleithen because the town had both NBR and CR stations, a magnificent site was available in Peebles, and the transport of materials was subsidised.

Much of the information on the Peebles mills in this thesis appears for the first time, since the history of the woollen industry in Victorian Peebles has so far been virtually ignored. The physical expansion of the town north of the High Street followed the appearance of the new woollen mills, in which the railways played a major role. According to a contemporary mill owner, Michael Thorburn, without the railways there would have been no steam-powered woollen industry in Peebles. The railways probably transported most of the migrant workers who arrived to fill the skilled jobs that were now available in the mills. The search through the Census material (Appendix 3) has thrown light on the widespread origins of the incoming woollen workers. Apart from a few born in England and Ireland, they came from all over Scotland, as far away as Caithness and the Isle of Skye, as well as from other Borders woollen towns. Native Peebleans worked in the shops and service industries required by a county town, or as domestic servants and labourers: they lacked the experience to fill the skilled factory jobs.

The Census data also show clearly that the local carriers were squeezed out once the railways arrived in the district. However, this did not mean a drop in the number of carters, for the railways generated an increasing amount of business in the carriage of freight to and from the various railway stations. If the Census Enumerators' Books are to be believed, there was only one carter employed directly by the railways in Peebles (Appendix 3, p.316). The use of Pigot's and Slater's Commercial Directories has also allowed us to follow in detail the changing business patterns in Peebles both before and after 1855, and to make direct comparisons with what was happening in Duns, a similar town in Berwickshire.

It is impossible to provide a wholly satisfactory answer to the question posed by Simmons, as to precisely what the railway did for the district. The main problem is the lack of detailed railway statistics: for example, we do not know the amount of passenger or goods traffic generated by the individual stations. However, we have already considered a number of tangible benefits that the railway brought to Peebles. A contemporary witness was Charles Tennant of the Glasgow chemical firm, who owned and lived on a large estate near Innerleithen. He believed that a railway could do for Innerleithen what the PR had done for Peebles, and he became an enthusiastic promoter of the Galashiels, Innerleithen & Peebles Railway (G&IPR). "Peebles was no longer the place it once was. Shops numerous and stirring met one in every direction. Markets, schools, banks, and last, but not least, the Chambers Institution were all in a flourishing condition. These were great assets, and he thought they had in great measure to thank the railway for them."<sup>12</sup> To complete the inventory, three further items should be added to Tennant's list: tourism, the woollen mills, and affordable transport for the people in the town and the surrounding district. Despite Fogel's caution concerning the credibility of contemporary witnesses (Chapter 1, p.6), I have no doubt that these benefits were real. In any case, the statistics extracted from the appropriate Census records and commercial directories have supported the local witnesses.

In monetary terms, the effect of the PR on Peebles would appear to be quite significant. John Bathgate, in his role as Town Clerk and Clerk to the Commissioners of Supply, was speaking as an expert witness when he produced the following figures. At the start of PR operations, the rental value of the Burgh in 1855-6 was £3,852 per annum and of the Landward area of the Parish £7,565. By 1861-2, the year when the railway was leased to the NBR, these figures had risen to £5,623 and £9,492 respectively: rises of 46 per cent and 25 per cent over 1855-6.<sup>13</sup> An example of the increase in land values along the railway will be found at Eddleston, where, at a

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<sup>12</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, (P.Adv.) 21/1/1860. From Tennant's speech at a public meeting to promote the G&IPR.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, 20/12/1852. From Bathgate's speech at his testimonial dinner.

public auction in 1862, the Earl of Wemyss and March bought the estate of Cornhope and Cloich for £25,000. This property had previously changed hands in 1841 for the sum of £13,000.<sup>14</sup> When considering this almost doubling in the value of the property, it should be noted that the average annual inflation rate over the 21 years was only 0.26 per cent.<sup>15</sup>

### **Contribution to the railway literature**

While Part 1 of the thesis concentrates on the effects of the PR and the other railways on Peebles and district, Part 2 places these issues in a wider context. Four topics have been pursued that do not seem to have been covered elsewhere. The first of these is the way that local taxation was levied on the railways of Scotland, and how it compared with that of a rather different system in England and Wales (Chapter 12). In Peeblesshire the railways paid a little over a fifth of the local rates, with the percentage being subject to considerable variation between individual parishes. This tax burden was lighter than that of railway companies such as the London & North Western Railway in England, which paid a third of all the parish rates within its network. A useful subject for further research would be to find local taxation data for two or three small English branch lines, to see how their assessments compared with those of the main line railways in England, and with branch lines in Scotland.

My analysis of local taxation in Scotland has necessarily been limited to the parishes and railways of Peeblesshire, and further research is required to find out if the railway companies in other Scottish counties paid similar tax levels. Did the Treasury-appointed Railway Assessor succeed in creating a uniform level of local taxation across the railways of Scotland, and did he correct anomalies of the kind that we saw in Stobo and Eddleston? Despite their objections to what they thought were unfair assessments, it seems likely that the railways rarely challenged the Assessor in the courts. We saw in Chapter 12 that the objections of the Caledonian Railway

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<sup>14</sup> *P.Adv.*, (ref.12) 27/12/1862.

<sup>15</sup> Source: Economic History Services. ([www.eh.net/hmit/inflation/](http://www.eh.net/hmit/inflation/)).

were mainly levelled at the burdensome provisions of the 1854 Valuation of Lands (Scotland) Act, but attempts to have these amended by lobbying Parliament were unsuccessful.

The second new question raised in this thesis concerns the building ticket schemes of a number of English and Scottish railway companies, and how effective they were. There does not seem to have been any previous attempt to compare these marketing ploys, their successes and failures, and their effects upon the built environment. With one or two exceptions, the various schemes discussed in Chapter 11 appear to have been only marginally successful in stimulating the growth of new suburbs. This is certainly true of Peebles, where I believe that the cheap freight rates for building materials were at least as important to builders as were the PRC building tickets. In any case, many owners of new villas in the town did not qualify under the building ticket regulations. An aspect worth further study is the relationship fostered between the property developer and the railway company, as we saw with Archibald Cameron Corbett in Ilford. For purposes of comparison, it would be interesting to see whether there are many more examples of such relationships, formed to circumvent Parliamentary regulations.

Tourism in the second half of the nineteenth century was made possible by the railways in Peeblesshire, and is the third topic that has not been the subject of previous detailed study. We saw in Chapter 2 (pp.30-1), that Peebles had long been isolated from the main road routes between Edinburgh and the north of England, and that few visitors were seen in the town in the first half of the nineteenth century. Peebles was placed on the tourist map by the arrival of the railways, by the attraction of the beautiful scenery of upper Tweeddale and its associations with Sir Walter Scott, and by the opening of the Peebles Hydropathic.

The final new issue is that of the Imperial Railway of Great Britain (Chapter 3, pp.44-6). Although the booklet by M.A. is listed in Ottley's *Bibliography of British Railway History*, I had not seen any further references to this fascinating proposal. Had it not been for the article in the

*Peeblesshire Advertiser*, this project with its potential implications for Peebles might never have come to light. The fact that M.A.'s booklet ran to a second edition shows that the scheme aroused at least a modicum of interest, and is something that merits further research. How far was it taken seriously, not only in Scotland but also in England and Wales, and how did the existing standard-gauge railway companies react? Was there an Imperial Railway Bill ever submitted to Parliament, or was it merely a paper exercise?

### **Comparative chapters—the importance of economic geography**

In Chapter 13 we looked at the outcome for Duns of the opening of the branch line of the NBR from Reston Junction on the main East Coast line, and the subsequent construction of the Berwickshire Railway (BR) from Duns to St Boswells. It became clear that for a number of reasons, the rail connections to Peebles were more successful than those to Duns. Much of the difficulty for the BR was due to competition from a pre-existing east-west railway running across Berwickshire, where there was insufficient traffic for two lines: consequently, the BR was not very profitable (Chapter 13, Note 27). There was a lack of foresight and a degree of over-optimism among the BR promoters. It is curious that not only were they supported by the NBR Board—who had already been obliged to single the line from Reston because of insufficient traffic—but that they were also required to buy enough land to provide for the possible future doubling of their line.

Compared with the BR, the PR had no competitor and made much more economic and geographical sense. The Peebles line had the additional benefit of a strong management team, with Bathgate and Thorburn living in Peebles and with Chambers a frequent visitor. Chambers divided his time between his town house in Edinburgh and his Peeblesshire estate at Glenormiston. The local Berwickshire Directors did not have the business experience of the Peebles trio, and, as none of them lived in Duns, they probably lacked a similar daily contact with the town's affairs.

However, further comparisons were needed to determine how efficient and well managed the PRC actually was. And so, the promotion and management of the Peebles Railway were compared with those of two branch lines in Yorkshire, one in Peeblesshire and one in Cumberland (Chapters 14 and 15). Comparisons had also been made earlier with three other Bouch railways in Scotland (Chapter 5, pp.85-90). The main criteria studied were the costs of construction, quality of management and profitability. On all three counts the PRC performed well, above all in the calibre of its Directors. Other lines like the St Andrews Railway also achieved low construction costs and good profit margins, but none of them appear to have been better run than the PR, or had Directors more attentive to the needs of their districts. The commendation from the French Government on the PRC management certainly supports this conclusion. Again, not many small branch lines in Britain could boast of producing a series of rising dividends for their shareholders, without a single year of losses. When the PRC was ultimately taken over, it extracted guaranteed ordinary dividends of eight per cent from the NBR, whose own dividends had never exceeded three per cent (Chapter 8, Fig. 8-7).

We have seen that there were a number of factors that led to the success of the PR. First of all, Peebles was set in beautiful countryside, within easy reach of Edinburgh. It had ample supplies of water for industrial purposes from local rivers teeming with salmon and trout to attract the angler and the holidaymaker, and, once it had achieved an efficient transport system, it was an attractive place to visit, to live and to work. Geographical factors were therefore of the utmost importance behind the concept of a railway between Peebles and Edinburgh, to be designed and built with the strictest economy in mind. In the early 1850s the time was right for such a scheme, as Peebles was at last emerging from its long period of stagnation. However, in the pre-Bouch era, Scottish railway construction costs were, on average, over £32,000 a mile, and there was no possibility of providing finance on this scale from within Peeblesshire to satisfy the Standing Orders of Parliament. The Cheap Railway Movement inaugurated by Bouch transformed the situation, as costs that fell to £6,000 a mile allowed branch lines to small towns

such as Peebles to be financially viable. When the PR was first promoted in April 1852, the railway construction workforce in Britain had been reduced to under 36,000 from the peak of over a quarter of a million at the height of the Railway Mania, and contractors were prepared to tender for work at bargain prices.<sup>16</sup> A low bank rate (Chapter 4, p.51) and improved incomes from agriculture meant that sufficient local investment was now a distinct possibility.

All these factors had to be in place before Peebles could be linked by rail to Edinburgh, with the consequent benefits to town and county. But, one final thing was still required. At this juncture Peebles was fortunate in having three men of outstanding ability—Bathgate, Chambers and Thorburn—to take on the challenge of initiating, organising and running a successful railway. In this challenge—apart from their undoubted devotion to the welfare of Peebles—the three friends were not entirely without self-interest. For Bathgate and Thorburn with their large families to support, they doubtless saw the Peebles Railway as a means of furthering their own businesses. For Chambers, it was probably more a matter of family pride, since he had been forced to quit Peebles, along with his parents and siblings, under the cloud of his father's bankruptcy. He had now returned to his birthplace as a man of consequence—rich landowner, successful author and publisher, Commissioner of Supply and magistrate—and he was determined to make his mark upon it.

But, even without these men, I have no doubt that Peebles would eventually have found itself within the Scottish railway network: the North British or the Caledonian would have seen to that. However, any further delay in the arrival of a railway might have been too great to accommodate the entrepreneurs who established the wholesale tweed warehouse, the woollen mills, and the Peebles Hydropathic. In this eventuality, the great expansion of the Royal Burgh and its economy would never have happened when and how it did.

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<sup>16</sup> T.R. Gourvish, *Railways and the British Economy, 1830-1914* (London, 1980) p.20.



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**PEEBLES RAILWAY COMPANY: HALF-YEAR RESULTS 1855 to 1876 <sup>1</sup>**

<b>HALF-YEAR</b>	<b>REVENUE</b>	<b>PASSENGER</b>	<b>GOODS</b>	<b>NET PROFIT</b>	<b>DIVIDEND</b>	<b>RATES/TAXES</b>
Sep 1855 to Feb 1856	£3,270	£1,664	£1,606	£776	-NIL-	N/A
Mar 1856 to Aug 1856	4,584	2,715	1,869	1,342	2½%	N/A
Sep 1856 to Feb 1857	4,153	2,019	2,135	1,669	3%	N/A
Mar 1857 to Aug 1857	5,344	2,898	2,446	1,889	2½%	N/A
Sep 1857 to Feb 1858	4,594	N/A	N/A	1,875	1½%	N/A
Mar 1858 to Aug 1858	5,425	N/A	N/A	2,178	2½%	N/A
Sep 1858 to Feb 1859	5,064	N/A	N/A	2,346	2½%	N/A
Mar 1859 to Aug 1859	5,723	N/A	N/A	3,348	3½%	N/A
Sep 1859 to Feb 1860	4,209	N/A	N/A	2,903	4½%	N/A
Mar 1860 to Aug 1860	6,170. <sup>2</sup>	3,066	3,104	2,730	5%	N/A
Sep 1860 to Jan 1861	5,833 <sup>3</sup>	2,488	3,345	2,029	4%	N/A
Feb 1861 to Jul 1861	3,124 <sup>4</sup>	N/A	N/A	2,425	5%	N/A
Aug 1861 to Jan 1862	3,363	1,581	1,782	2,644	5½%	277
Feb 1862 to Jul 1862	3,116	N/A	N/A	2,625	5½%	167
Aug 1862 to Jan 1863	3,491	N/A	N/A	2,851	6%	231
Feb 1863 to Jul 1863	3,653	1,529	2,124	3,338	6%	107
Aug 1863 to Jan 1864	3,807	N/A	N/A	3,179	6%	N/A
Feb 1864 to Jul 1864	3,473	N/A	N/A	3,005	6%	N/A
Aug 1864 to Jan 1865	3,634	N/A	N/A	2,967	6%	304
Feb 1865 to Jul 1865	3,377	N/A	N/A	2,908	6%	N/A
Aug 1865 to Jan 1866	3,855	2,902	1,835	3,268	6½%	281

<sup>1</sup> The gaps in this table are due to inconsistencies in the reporting of results before 1866.

<sup>2</sup> Revenue reached the original forecast of £10 per mile/week for the first time.

<sup>3</sup> Five months only. Dividend would have been 5% for the full half year.

<sup>4</sup> Note that from the February 1861 leasing arrangement with the NBR, this figure represents a half share of the total revenue. The reporting date was changed to align with the NBR financial year, and the revenue for this half year was not disclosed.

HALF-YEAR	REVENUE	PASSENGER	GOODS	NET PROFIT	DIVIDEND	RATES/TAXES
Feb 1866 to Jul 1866	£3,446	£1,776	£1,669	£3,213	6¼%	N/A
Aug 1866 to Jan 1867	3,544	1,842	1,702	2,956	6¼%	244
Feb 1867 to Jul 1867	3,710	1,846	1,864	3,103	6½%	173
Aug 1867 to Jan 1868	3,826	1,995	1,832	3,096	6½%	256
Feb 1868 to Jul 1868	3,927	1,975	1,952	3,209	6¾%	168
Aug 1868 to Jan 1869	3,884	2,100	1,784	3,140	6¾%	258
Feb 1869 to Jul 1869	3,954	2,021	1,933	3,407	6¾%	190
Aug 1869 to Jan 1870	3,959	2,013	1,946	3,259	6¾%	300
Feb 1870 to Jul 1870	4,048	1,990	2,058	3,426	7%	168
Aug 1870 to Jan 1871	4,097	2,116	1,980	3,430	6¾%	296
Feb 1871 to Jul 1871	4,371	2,057	2,314	3,833	7½%	185
Aug 1871 to Jan 1872	4,513	2,253	2,260	3,815	7½%	315
Feb 1872 to Jul 1872	4,195	2,125	2,069	3,267	7¼%	170
Aug 1872 to Jan 1873	3,647	2,151	1,497	2,970	6¼%	311
Feb 1873 to Jul 1873	4,056	2,090	1,966	3,546	7%	163
Aug 1873 to Jan 1874	4,075	2,325	1,750	3,360	7%	352
Feb 1874 to Jul 1874	4,162	2,436	1,726	3,628	7%	183
Aug 1874 to Jan 1875	4,254	2,390	1,863	3,517	7%	390
Feb 1875 to Jul 1875	4,342	2,530	1,812	3,766	7½%	225
Aug 1875 to Jan 1876	4,521	2,602	1,919	3,779	7½%	383
Feb 1876 to Jul 1876	4,685	2,623	2,062	3,883	7½%	240

## **TRADES AND PROFESSIONS IN VICTORIAN PEEBLES.**

### **Introduction**

It should be remembered that in 1837, Peebles consisted of three main streets, Old Town (with Biggiesknowe and Bridgegate), Northgate and the High Street (Chapter 2, Fig.2-1), and that the great expansion of the town did not come until after 1867. Although by 1889 a number of shops and other small businesses were to be found in the area of new housing north of the Old Town, professional men such as lawyers and bankers continued to concentrate in the High Street and the Northgate.

After the Peebles Railway arrived in 1855, a number of trades such as brewers and coopers declined due to competition which was mainly from Edinburgh, while the stagecoach and carrier firms disappeared. Once the steam-powered woollen mills opened—based on cheap coal brought in by the railway—the cottage industry of handloom weaving was doomed.

As the population expanded, retailers such as grocers, drapers and butchers increased in number. Many businesses carried on from one generation to the next—examples can be seen in the Ker, Turnbull, Morrison and Hislop families (Tailors; Painters & Glaziers; China & Glass dealers; Clock & Watchmakers). With the growth of the Peebles built environment, the number of masons, builders and plumbers doubled.

New occupational categories in Peebles were made possible by the railways. Coal merchants (concentrated on the railway stations) appeared in the 1867 directory for the first time, as did lodging-houses. The latter were mainly the result of incoming woollen and railway workers unable to find suitable housing, and also the growing popularity of Peebles with holidaymakers.

TRADE OR PROFESSION	1837		1852	
<b>BREWERS</b>	James Adamson Adam Robertson John Scott	Tweed Green Cuddy Bridge St Michael's Wynd	Robert Brown & Co. Jane Robertson	Biggiesknowe Cuddy Bridge
<b>COOPERS</b>	Robert Gibson James Robertson Alexander Thomson	High Street Old Town East Port	Robert Gibson James Robertson Alexander Thomson	High Street Old Town East Port
<b>INNS AND HOTELS</b>	Harrow (later Commercial) Thomas Wilson	High Street	Commercial	High Street Thomas Wallace
	Tontine	High Street James Cameron	Tontine	High Street Duncan Macpherson
	Cross Keys	Northgate Elizabeth Hope	Cross Keys	Northgate Walter Brydon
			Crown	High Street Charles Fraser
<b>BAKERS</b>	James Dickson John Gray John Hume Isabella Mathieson	High Street High Street High Street High Street	James Hopkirk Davidson Mitchell Robert Shillinglaw George Smibert	High Street High Street High Street High Street
<b>CABINET MAKERS AND UPHOLSTERERS</b>	John Ballantyne Brown & Shillinglaw Thomas Richardson	Biggiesknowe High Street High Street	John Ballantyne John King	Biggiesknowe High Street
<b>BOOTS AND SHOES</b>	John Baptie Alexander Simpson Robert Brydon James Henderson John Muirhead John Potts William Walker James & William Whitie	High Street Northgate Old Town West Port East Port High Street Biggiesknowe East Port	John Baptie Alexander Simpson Robert Brydon Thomas Gilroy George Lumsden John Muirhead Thomas Walker James Whitie John Whitie	High Street Northgate Old Town High Street Old Town High Street Biggiesknowe High Street High Street

TRADE OR PROFESSION	1867		1889	
<b>BREWERS</b>	Robt. & John Potts	St Michael's Wynd	None	
<b>COOPERS</b>	James Robertson	Old Town	None	
<b>INNS AND HOTELS</b>	Commercial	High Street Alexander Wallace	Commercial	High Street Wm. Borthwick
	Tontine	High Street John Smith	Tontine	High Street George Leith
	Cross Keys	Northgate Hugh Mitchell	Cross Keys	Northgate Wm. Fraser
	Crown	High Street Margaret Mathieson	Crown	High Street Henry Macarthur
	Railway	Old Town Walter Brydon	Green Tree	Eastgate Wm. Hughes
<b>BAKERS</b>	Davidson Mitchell	High Street	George Dalling	High Street
	Robert Dickson	High Street	John Goodburn	Northgate
	John Hume	High Street	Stephen Howitt	High Street
	William Martin	High Street	D. Mitchell & Sons	High Street
	James Rutherford	High Street	J. Oldham	Eastgate
			Wm. Scott	Eastgate
			Peebles Co-op	Greenside
<b>CABINET MAKERS AND UPHOLSTERERS</b>	John Ballantyne	Biggiesknowe	Thos. Black	Tweed Green
	John & James Smith	High Street	John & James Smith	Eastgate
			Jas.&David. Murray	Murrayfield
<b>BOOTS AND SHOES</b>	John Baptie	High Street	John Baptie	Waterside
	James Jones	High Street	Alex. Mackenzie	Elcho Street
	George Lumsden	Elcho Street	James Mason	High Street
	Neil M'Intyre	High Street	Maybole Boot Co	Northgate
	James Stavert	High Street	Matthew Oldham	Northgate
	Robert Stirling	High Street	Thos. Ormiston	Northgate
	Alexander Walker	Biggiesknowe	George Smith	High Street
	James Whitie	High Street	John Somerville	Eastgate
	John Whitie	High Street	Mary Whitie	High Street

TRADE OR PROFESSION	1837		1852	
<b>TAILORS</b>	Archibald Donaldson George Donaldson John Green Charles Ker Alexander Scott James Walker	High Street East Port High Street High Street High Street High Street	Archibald Donaldson George Donaldson John Green James Hill James Ker George Mason Alexander Scott & Son William Scott	High Street East Port High Street Old Town High Street High Street High Street High Street
<b>MILLINERS &amp; DRESSMAKERS</b>	Menie Forbes Catherine Leadbitter Misses Marshall	Northgate High Street East Port	Barbara Brodie Mary Forbes Martha Gibson Jane Hall ♦ Margaret Hislop I. & E. Nelson Elizabeth Simpson Mary Williamson ♦ ( ♦ also straw-hat makers)	Northgate Northgate Old Town High Street Bridgegate Northgate Northgate Biggiesknowe
<b>DRUGGISTS</b>	Robert Craig William M'Nab	High Street High Street	William M'Nab William Wilson	High Street High Street
<b>FLESHERS (Butchers)</b>	Ballantyne & Cairns James Brydon John Keddie	High Street High Street High Street	John Keddie James Mitchell Joseph Weir	High Street High Street High Street
<b>GROCERS</b>	John Elder Robert Frazer Robert W. Ker David Paterson William Smeal Francis Spalding Alexander Wilkie (The above also Spirit Dealers)	West Port High Street High Street High Street High Street Northgate Northgate	John Elder Robert W. Ker Jane Adamson James Ballantyne James Laurie Isabel Mathieson John Pairman Thomas Spiers James Thomson John Walinck George Wilkie Christopher Young (The above also Spirit Dealers)	West Port High Street High Street Tweedbridge End Northgate Northgate High Street High Street High Street High Street Northgate Northgate
<b>MASONS &amp; BUILDERS</b>	James Lambert Robert Ritchie Alexander Wilkie John Wilkie	Biggiesknowe High Street Northgate Northgate	Robert Mitchell Robert Ritchie Robt. & Thos. Veitch George Wilkie	High Street High Street School Brae Northgate

**TRADE OR PROFESSION****1867****1889****TAILORS**

Archibald Donaldson	High Street	Peter Dalling	Northgate
Peter Dalling	Northgate	Robt. Williamson	High Street
Andrew Green	High Street	Alex. Ker	Old Town
James Hill	Old Town	Charles Ker	High Street
James Ker	High Street	Alex. Brown	Northgate
John Paxton	High Street	Alex. Cranston	Venlaw Road
William Scott	High Street	James Cranston	High Street
Robert Williamson	High Street	Melrose & Co.	High Street
		William Whitie	High Street

**MILLINERS & DRESSMAKERS**

Isabella Bertram	Elcho Street	Mgt. Ferguson	Northgate
Marion Forbes	Northgate	Mgt. Goodburn	Northgate
Agnes Ramsay	Elcho Street	Ann Green	Caledonian Terr.
M. & H. Hollis	High Street	John Green	High Street
Melrose, Menzies & Co.	High Street	Melrose & Co.	High Street
		Alex Thomson	Eastgate

**DRUGGISTS**

George Morrison	High Street	Robt. Lindsay	High Street
		Geo. Morrison	High Street
		Wm. Sanderson	High Street

**FLESHERS (Butchers)**

John Keddie	High Street	Thos. Horsburgh	Elcho St. Brae
William Dalling	High Street	William Dalling	High Street
John Laidlaw	High Street	John Laidlaw	Northgate
John Little	High Street	John Montgomery	High Street
		James Turnbull	High Street

**GROCERS**

Rosina Brydon	High Street	George Brown	Northgate
Edward Dickson	High Street	John Clapperton	Eastgate
James Haliburton	High Street	John Goodwillie	Northgate
James Melrose	High Street	Timothy Cleland	Young Street
Alexander Thomson	High Street	James Henderson	High Street
Thomson & Tait	High Street	Hogg & Stewart	Young Street
Elizabeth Fleming	Old Town	George Hush	High Street
Thomas Hughes	Old Town	W. Lauder	Montgomery Place
James Whitson	Old Town	Christine Little	Eastgate
Peter Dalling	Northgate	Mary Lochart	Northgate
Catherine Leadbetter	Northgate	Samuel M'Innes	High Street
Margaret Niven	Northgate	Barbara Morris	March Street
Elizabeth French	Tweedbridge End	James Pairman	High Street
Charles Grieve	Biggiesknowe	Thomas Peden	High Street
Robert Lawrie	Bridgegate	Peebles Co-op	Greenside
		Robert Phillip	Old Town
		James Russell	High Street
		Robt/ Russell	Bridge House
		Thomas Russell	High Street
		Alex. Shiel	Old Town
		Adam Thomson	Northgate
		James White	High Street

**MASONS & BUILDERS**

Alexander Dickson	High Street	Dickson & Clyde	Caley Stn.
John & Robert Veitch	High Street	J. & D. Murray	Murrayfield
James & David Murray	Bridgegate	David Nimmo	Innerleithen Rd
George Wilkie	Damdale	J.&J. Ramsay	Caley Stn.
William Graham	Damdale	Alex. Thomson	Northgate
		William Tod	Caley Stn.
		Robert Veitch	High Street
		Wilkie & Graham	Damdale

TRADE OR PROFESSION	1837		1852	
<b>PAINTERS &amp; GLAZIERS</b>	James Donaldson William Turnbull John C. Walker	Old Town High Street East Port	William Turnbull John C. Walker	High Street High Street
<b>TANNERS &amp; SKINNERS</b>	David Thomson William Wallace	Old Town Northgate	William Wallace George Turnbull	Northgate Old Town
<b>BLACKSMITHS &amp; FARRIERS</b>	Thomas Borrowman Alexander Brodie John Dickson John Ker John Scott Alexander Wilson	Cuddy Bridge Northgate East Port Northgate Old Town Northgate	Andrew Borrowman Alexander Brodie John Ker Alexander Wilson	Cuddy Bridge Northgate Northgate Northgate
<b>IRONMONGERS</b>	Thomas Gilroy William Hamilton John Paterson	West Port High Street High Street	William Hamilton John Paterson	High Street High Street
<b>NAIL MAKERS</b>	Daniel Dow William Hamilton John Paterson	West Port High Street High Street	William Hamilton John Paterson	High Street High Street
<b>SADDLERS</b>	James Donaldson James Scott John Young	East Port High Street Northgate	James Scott John Young	High Street Northgate
<b>CLOCK &amp; WATCHMAKERS</b>	Robert Currer John Hislop Charles Tait	High Street Bridgegate High Street	John Hislop Charles Tait	Bridgegate High Street
<b>WRIGHTS &amp; CARPENTERS</b>	Thomas Brydon Alexander Donald John Grieve Thomas Grieve Thomas Watson James White	Tweedbridge End Waulk Mill High Street Old Town Old Town East Port	Alexander Dickson Andrew Fergus William Veitch Thomas White	High Street Bridgegate Tweedbridge End High Street



TRADE OR PROFESSION	1867	1889		
<b>PAINTERS &amp; GLAZIERS</b>	John Turnbull Peter Walker Thos. Grieve (also Plumber)	High Street High Street Old Town	James Grieve A.W. Hamilton Adam Steele John Turnbull	Old Town High Street Eastgate High Street
<b>TANNERS &amp; SKINNERS</b>	Anderson & Forrest	Greenside	Hume & Thomson	(No address)
<b>BLACKSMITHS &amp; FARRIERS</b>	Patrick Ferguson Charles T. Ker Thomas Brydon & Son	Northgate Northgate Cuddyside	James Brydon John Ferguson Charles T. Ker	High Street Northgate Northgate
<b>IRONMONGERS</b>	John Paterson Archibald Blackie William Moffat Robert Stirling John Thomson Thomas D. Grieve	High Street High Street High Street High Street High Street Old Town	James Grieve W.& R. Moffat Duncan Paterson James Robertson John Thomson	Old Town High Street High Street High Street Eastgate
<b>NAIL MAKERS</b>	John Paterson William Moffat	High Street High Street	None	
<b>SADDLERS</b>	John Young James Symington William Weatherston	Northgate High Street High Street	William Adams Wm. Weatherston	High Street High Street
<b>CLOCK &amp; WATCHMAKER</b>	John Hislop Charles Tait James Edey	Bridgegate High Street Old Town	Robert Hislop John Murdoch George Taylor	High Street Northgate Northgate
<b>WRIGHTS &amp; CARPENTERS</b>	Alexander Dickson Andrew Ferguson Thomas White John & Robert Veitch James & David Murray Richard Thomson Adam Watson (& sawmill)	High Street Bridgegate High Street High Street Bridgegate High Street Old Town	Robt. Mathieson David Nimmo J. & D. Murray Renwick & Weir Thomas Wallace Adam Watson	High Street Innerleithen Rd. Murrayfield Elcho Street Bridgegate Old Town

TRADE OR PROFESSION		1837	1852	
CHINA & GLASS DEALERS	Robert Frazer	High Street	James Morrison	High Street
	James Morrison	High Street	Susan Richardson	Bridgegate
LINEN & WOOLLENS	None		John Melrose	Old Town
			John Stirling	High Street
			Walter Thorburn & Co. ♦	High Street
			George Veitch	High Street
			(♦ Tweed Merchant: later Lowe, Donald & Co.)	
WEAVERS	Robert Stoddart	West Port	Robert Stoddart	West Port
			James Ballantyne	Old Town
			Robert Brown	Old Town
			Henry Henderson	Tweedbridge End
			John Hunter	Biggiesknowe
			Alexander Laidlaw	High Street
			(Note: These were probably master weavers employing others. The 1851 Census gives 27 Weavers in total.)	
SLATERS	Walter Dickson	East Port	William Keith	High Street
	James Fairgrieve & Sons	Northgate		
PLUMBERS	(None: no piped water)		John Thomson	High Street
PRINTERS & BOOKSELLERS	Alexander Scott	High Street	Alexander Scott	High Street
	(and Bookbinder)		(and Bookbinder)	
			Robert Stirling (junior)	High Street
HAIRDRESSER	John Murray	East Port	John Henry	High Street

TRADE OR PROFESSION	1867		1889	
<b>CHINA &amp; GLASS DEALERS</b>	William Broadly Mary Dixon Joanna & Mgt. Morison	Northgate Northgate High Street	Alison Aitchison William Brockie Mary Dixon John Fisher Eliz.& Mgt. Morison	Northgate Northgate Northgate Old Town High Street
<b>LINEN &amp; WOOLLENS</b>	John Stirling George Veitch Melrose, Menzies & Co.♦ Alexander Thomson ♦ Now owner of Thorburn business.	High Street High Street High Street High Street	Caledonian Drapery Margaret Goodburn John Green Geo Mellis & Co. Melrose & Co. Robert Phillips George Veitch & Sons Robert Veitch William Whitie Peebles Co-op	Eastgate Northgate High Street Northgate High Street Old Town High Street High Street High Street Greenside
<b>WEAVERS</b>	Robert Stoddart John Hunter Alexander Laidlaw	High Street Biggiesknowe High Street	None	
<b>SLATERS</b>	Alexander Henry Robert Russell	Old Town Damdale	William Fairbairn David Nimmo James paterson	March Street Innerleithen Rd Old Town
<b>PLUMBERS</b>	John Thomson Thomas Grieve John Wilson	High Street Old Town Old Town	Archibald Forsyth James Grieve John Thomson John Wilson	Eastgate Old Town Eastgate Northgate
<b>PRINTERS, BOOKSELLERS &amp; NEWSAGENTS</b>	Robert Stirling (junior) (Publisher of Peeblesshire Advertiser) William Clark (Printer of Peeblesshire Advertiser)	High Street High Street High Street	Henry Broadhead Andrew Henderson James Kerr Adam Redpath Andrew Smyth James Watson	High Street High Street Eastgate High Street High Street High Street
<b>HAIRDRESSER</b>	John Hunter	High Street	William Swanson	Northgate

TRADE OR PROFESSION		1837	1852
INSURANCE AGENTS	Caledonian	High Street Robert W. Ker	Caledonian High Street John Stirling
	Edinburgh (Life)	West Port Robert D. Douglas	Edinburgh (Life) Northgate William Blackwood
	Friendly (Fire)	Northgate John Fotheringham	Insurance Co. of Scotland High Street Walter Thorburn
	Insurance Co. of Scotland	East Port Robert D. Douglas	Scottish Union Northgate William Stuart
	North British	High Street William Turnbull	Sun (Fire) Northgate John Fotheringham
	Scottish Equitable (Life)	West Port Wilson & Bathgate	East of Scotland (Life) Northgate John Fotheringham
	Scottish Union	Northgate John Welsh W.S.	English & Scottish Law Northgate Robert Stirling
	Sun (Fire)	West Port Wilson & Bathgate	North British High Street William Turnbull
			Standard (Life) High Street Walter Thorburn

TRADE OR PROFESSION	1867	1889
INSURANCE AGENTS	Accidental Death	High Street
		G. Morrison
	British Guarantee	Northgate
		Stuart & Blackwood
	Briton Medical & General	High Street
		A.G. Blackie
	Caledonian	High Street
		John Stirling
	Crown (Life)	High Street
		John M. Russell
	Economic (Life)	High Street
		John Buchan
	Edinburgh (Life)	Northgate
		William Blackwood
	English & Scottish Law	Northgate
		Robert Stirling
	General	High Street
		John Buchan
	Life Association of Scotland	High Street
		John Buchan
	Insurance Co. of Scotland	High Street
		♦ Walter Thorburn
	North British	High Street
		J.D. Bathgate
	Patriotic	Northgate
		Robert Stirling
	Phoenix	High Street
		John Buchan
	Plate Glass	High Street
		G. Morrison
	Railway Passengers	High Street
		J.D. Bathgate
	Rock (Life)	High Street
		G. Morrison
	Royal	High Street
		Walter Hume
	Scottish Equitable	High Street
		J.D. Bathgate
	Scottish Imperial (Life)	High Street
		A.G. Blackie
	Scottish Mutual Plate Glass	High Street
		A.G. Blackie
	Scottish Provident	High Street
		Robert Stevenson
	Standard (Life)	High Street
		♦ Walter Thorburn
	Sun (Fire)	Northgate
		William Blackwood
	♦ Walter Thorburn died in Feb. 1867.	
	Caledonian	High Street
		William Swanson
	Caledonian	Crossland Cresc.
		Thomas Gray
	Commercial Union	Bridge House
		William Muir
	Commercial Union	High Street
		William Whittie
	Edinburgh (Life)	High Street
		Blackwood & Smith
	Insurance Co. of Scotland	High Street
		Robert Thorburn
	Lancashire (Accident)	High Street
		Adam Redpath
	Lanes & Yorks Accident	High Street
		James White
	Liverpool, & London & Globe Cross-	
	-land Cresc.,	Thomas Gray
	London & Lancashire	Eastgate
		John A. Gray
	London & North British Plate Glass	
		High Street, Alexander Yellowlees
	London Assurance Corp.	Eastgate
		John A. Gray
	North British & Mercantile	
		High Street, Blackwood & Smith
	Northern	British Linen Bank
		High Street, Andrew Yellowlees
	Norwich Union	High Street
		James White
	Phoenix (Fire)	High Street
		J. & W. Buchan
	Plate Glass	High Street
		G. Morrison
	Scottish Amicable	High Street
		Robert Veitch
	Scottish Temperance	Bridge House
		William Muir
	Scottish Union & National	
		High Street, J. & W. Buchan
	Scottish Union & National	
		High Street, Blackwood & Smith
	Scottish Union & National	
		High Street, A. Philip
	Scottish Widows	High Street
		J. & W. Buchan
	Sickness & Accident	High Street
		Blackwood & Smith
	Standard (Life)	High Street
		Robert Thorburn
	Sun (Fire)	High Street
		John R. Smith & Alexander Philip

TRADE OR PROFESSION	1837		1852	
BANKERS	John Welsh W.S. (Agent for British Linen Bank)	Northgate	British Linen Company City of Glasgow Savings Bank	Northgate Stuart & Blackwood High Street Walter Thorburn Northgate Robert Stirling
WRITERS (Solicitors)	Douglas R. Duncan John Fotheringham William Laidlaw John Welsh W.S. Wilson & Bathgate	East Port Northgate Old Town Northgate West Port	John Fotheringham John Bathgate William Blackwood John Buchan William Stuart	Northgate High Street Northgate High Street Northgate
SURGEONS	Robert Craig John Reid Alexander Renton David Smith	Bridgegate High Street East Port Biggiesknowe	Robert Craig Alexander Renton John B. Junor John Macnab	Bridgegate High Street Northgate High Street
VETERINARY SURGEONS	Patrick Ferguson	Northgate	Patrick Ferguson	Northgate
AUCTIONEERS	William Robertson	Old Town	William Robertson	Old Town
NURSERY & SEEDSMEN	Thomas Gentle James Spalding	High Street Northgate	Thomas Gentle & Son Thomas & James Spalding	High Street Northgate
CARRIERS	<u>To Edinburgh</u> James Marshall John Blaikie  <u>To Galashiels</u> William Young  <u>To Glasgow</u> Robertson & Scott  <u>To Selkirk &amp; Hawick</u> Robertson & Scott  <u>To Innerleithen</u> Thomas Scott	Monday & Thursday Tuesday & Friday  Wednesday  Tuesdays fortnightly Tuesday Thursday	<u>To Edinburgh</u> Hope & Aitchison Isabella Scott George Hamilton Thomas Scott (Stobo)  <u>To Dalkeith</u> Andrew Rutherford  <u>To Innerleithen &amp; Galashiels</u> Isabella Scott	Mon. & Thurs. Monday Friday Weekly in summer, Fortnightly in winter.  Monday Thursday

TRADE OR PROFESSION	1867		1889	
<b>BANKERS</b>	British Linen Bank	High Street	British Linen Bank	High Street
	Savings Bank	Blackwood & Smith Northgate	Blackwood & Smith Bank of Scotland	High Street
	Bank of Scotland	Robert Stirling High Street	Robert Thorburn Commercial Bank	High Street
	Union Bank of Scotland	Walter Thorburn High Street J.D.Bathgate	J.& W. Buchan	
<b>WRITERS (Solicitors)</b>	Blackwood & Smith	High Street	Blackwood & Smith	High Street
	John Buchan	High Street	John & Wm. Buchan	High Street
	William Stuart	Northgate	Thomas W. Dickson	County Bldg.
	J.D.Bathgate & Stevenson	High Street	Robert Thorburn	High Street
	Robert Thorburn	High Street		
<b>SURGEONS</b>	Robert Craig	Caverhill	John Connel	Northgate
	John B.Junor	Northgate	Clement Gunn	Old Town
	Robert Crawford	Girdwood Street	Archibald M'Lean	Crossland Cresc.
<b>VETERINARY SURGEONS</b>	Patrick Ferguson	Northgate	John Johnston	Montgomery Pl.
	James Ker	Biggiesknowe		
<b>AUCTIONEERS</b>	Archibald Blackie	High Street	J.& J. Smith	Eastgate
<b>NURSERY &amp; SEEDSMEN</b>	Thomas Gentle & Son	High Street	James Pairman	High Street
	Thomas & James Spalding	High Street	Thos. Spalding & Co.	High Street
	Archibald Blackie	High Street		
	Andrew Cosser	High Street		
	James Pairman	High Street		
	William scott	Tweed Green		
<b>CARRIERS</b>	<b>To Edinburgh</b>			
	Jas. Henderson (Broughton)	Thursday	None	
	R. Newbigging (Broughton)	Friday		
	Alexander Sinclair (Skirling)	Friday		
	<b>Note</b> According to the 1861 and 1871 Censuses, James Henderson resided in Peebles, although his business was in Stobo.			

1867

1889

**LODGING HOUSES**  
(A new Category in 1867)

**APARTMENTS**

Hannah Armstrong	Old Town	George Brown	Montgomery Pl.
- Blyth	Elcho Street	Misses Donaldson	High Street
- Cogan	Northgate	J. Ferguson	Northgate
William Dalling	High Street	Jane Graham	Elcho Street
Mrs Dixon	Northgate	Marion Greig	Gladstone Pl.
Archibald Donaldson	High Street	Annie Johnston	Shamrock Cott.
- Graham	Elcho Street	Charles Ker	High Street
James Henderson	Eastgate	Mary Ketchion	Rosetta Road
Miss Hyslop	Bridgend	Mary Law	Elcho Street
J. McWilliam	Biggiesknowe	William Macadam	March Street
J. Melrose	Elcho Street	Peter Macgregor	Crossland Cresc.
Justina Murray	West Port	Andrew Melrose	Elcho Street
Richard Niven	Old Town	Richard Niven	Eastgate
♦Ninian Notman	Northgate	Christina Ross	Stewartfield
John Paterson	High Street	John M. Russell	High Street
John M. Russell	High Street	William Scott	Eastgate
William Scott	High Street	Alexander Smyth	Bridgegate
Alex Thomson	High Street	Isabella Walker	March Street
John Thomson	Eastgate	George Wilson	Elcho Street
- Willins	High Street		

♦ Notman was also Chief Constable

'Apartments' was presumably a more up-market description for lodging houses.



# Appendix 3 Peebles Census

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES</u>		<u>CARRIERS &amp; CARTERS</u>		<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES	ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND		ENGLAND	IRELAND
<b>1841</b>					
6 Carriers 1 Carter		2 Carriers 1 Carter			
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 3		TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 10</u>					
<hr/>					
<b>1851</b>					
2 Carriers 3 Carters		Carrier Carrier Carrier 2 Carters Carter Carter	Dumfriesshire Berwickshire Galashiels Dumfriesshire Melrose Edinburgh		Carter
TOTAL 5	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 7		TOTAL 0	TOTAL 1
<u>GRAND TOTAL 13</u>					
<hr/>					
<b>1861</b>					
1 Carrier 6 Carters		Carrier Carrier 2 Carters Carter Carter Carter	Selkirkshire Berwickshire Berwickshire Dumfriesshire Forfar Edinburgh		
TOTAL 7	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 7		TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 14</u>					
<hr/>					
<b>1871</b>					
5 Carters Wood Carter	2 Carters Carter Carter Carter	Eddleston Stobo Drumelzier Glenholm	Carrier Carter	Selkirk Heriot	2 Carters
TOTAL 6	TOTAL 5	TOTAL 2		TOTAL 0	TOTAL 2
<u>GRAND TOTAL 15</u>					

NOTE The Census recorded where inhabitants were born. We can see that in 1851 only two of the carriers living in Peebles had been born in the Parish. The rest were born in other parts of Scotland.

# Appendix 3 Peebles Census

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES</u>			<u>CARRIERS &amp; CARTERS</u>		<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES		ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND		ENGLAND	IRELAND
1881						
5 Carters	Carter	Stobo	Carter	Heriot		
	Carter	Traquair	2 Carters	Edinburgh		
	Carter	Glenholm	Carter	Midlothian		
	Carter	Innerleithen	Carter	Perthshire		
			Carter	Jedburgh		
			Carter	Selkirk		
			Carter	Haddington		
			Carter	Carstairs		
TOTAL 5	TOTAL 4		TOTAL 9		TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 18</u>						
1891						
8 Carters	2 Carters	Stobo	Carrier	Midlothian		
	2 Carters	Newlands	4 Carters	Midlothian (1L)		
	Carter	West Linton (L)	Carter	Lanarkshire		
			Carter	Kirkcudbrightshire		
			Carter	Dumfriesshire		
			Carter	Edinburgh		
			Carter	Leith		
			Carter	Fife		
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 5		TOTAL 11		TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 24</u>						
					<u>LODGERS 2</u>	

(L) = Lodger

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES</u>		<u>RAILWAYMEN</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES	ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	IRELAND
<b>1861</b>				
Surfaceman		Engine Cleaner	Edinburgh	Railway Inspector
Clerk		Engine Driver	Forfar	Clerk
Audit Clerk		Engine Driver	Dalkeith	
Porter		Engine Fireman	Fife (L)	Surfaceman
Labourer		Engine Fireman	Aberdeenshire	
		Engine Fireman	Midlothian (L)	
		Platelayer	Perthshire (L)	
		Guard	Fife	
		Guard	Musselburgh	
		Engine Fitter	Galashiels	
		Engine Fitter	Edinburgh (L)	
		Engine Fitter	Fife	
		Station Master	Glasgow	
		Clerk	Fife (L)	
		Porter	Fife	
		Porter	Edinburgh	
		Porter	Roxburghshire	
		Labourer	Arbroath	
<b>TOTAL 5</b>	<b>TOTAL 0</b>	<b>TOTAL 18</b>	<b>TOTAL 2</b>	<b>TOTAL 1</b>
<b><u>GRAND TOTAL 26</u></b>			<b><u>LODGERS 4</u></b>	

<b>1871</b>				
Railway Carter	Pointsman	Manor	Engine Cleaner	East Lothian (L)
Engine Cleaner	Surfaceman	Carlops	Engine Driver	Fife
Telegraph Clerk			Engine Driver	Kincardineshire
			Engine Driver	Dalkeith
			Engine Driver	Lanarkshire
			Engine Fireman	Kircudbrightshire
			Engine Fireman	Edinburgh
			Engine Fireman	Lanarkshire
			Engine Fireman	Banffshire (L)
			Surfaceman	Dalkeith
			Surfaceman	Selkirk
			Surfaceman	Edinburgh
			Platelayer	Perthshire
			Platelayer	Lanarkshire
			2 Guards	Midlothian (1L)
			Guard	Fife
			Guard	Lanarkshire
			Engine Fitter	Galashiels
			Station Master	Kircudbrightshire
			Station Agent	Fife
			Porter	Haddingtonshire
			Porter	Perthshire (L)
			Porter	Linlithgowshire
			Porter	Lanarkshire
			Porter	Dumfriesshire
			Porter	Aberdeenshire (L)
			Porter	Leith
			Labourer	Lanarkshire
			Labourer	Perth
			Crossing Keeper	Lanarkshire (f)
			2 Station Buffet	Fife (2f)
<b>TOTAL 3</b>	<b>TOTAL 2</b>	<b>TOTAL 33 (3f)</b>	<b>TOTAL 2</b>	<b>TOTAL 1</b>

(f) = Female

**GRAND TOTAL 41****LODGERS 6**

# Appendix 3 Peebles Census

<u>PARISH OF PEBBLES</u>			<u>RAILWAYMEN</u>		<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
PEEBLES	OTHER PEBBLES PARISHES		ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND		ENGLAND	IRELAND
<b>1881</b>						
2 Surfacemen	Surfaceman	Newlands	Engine Driver	Dalkeith	Superintendent	Surfaceman
Porter	Surfaceman	West Linton	Engine Driver	Wigtownshire		Porter
Railway Carter	Surfaceman	Broughton	Engine Fireman	Lanarkshire		
	Porter	Kirkurd	Engine Fireman	Midlothian		
	Porter	West Linton	2 Pointsmen	Dumfriesshire		
	Goods Clerk	Broughton (L)	2 Surfacemen	Midlothian (1L)		
	Clerk	West Linton	2 Surfacemen	Lanarkshire (1L)		
			Surfaceman	Dalkeith		
			Surfaceman	Fife		
			Surfaceman	Perthshire		
			Platelayer	Edinburgh		
			Platelayer	Invernesshire		
			Guard	Lanarkshire		
			Guard	Dumfriesshire		
			Goods Guard	Leith (L)		
			Engine Fitter	Midlothian (L)		
			Station Master	Kircudbrightshire		
			Station Agent	Glasgow		
			Porter	Linlithgowshire		
			Porter	Dumfriesshire		
			Porter	Aberdeenshire		
			Labourer	Perth		
			Inspector	Melrose		
			Wagon Inspector	Lanarkshire		
			Carriage Inspector	Midlothian		
			Booking Clerk	Roxburgh (L)		
			Goods Clerk	Fife (L)		
			Clerk	Dumfriesshire (L)		
			2 Telegraph Clerks	Midlothian (1f)		
			Telegraph Clerk	Leith		
			Joiner	Selkirkshire		
			Policeman	Dumfriesshire		
			Stocksman	Lanarkshire		
			Crossing Keeper	Lanarkshire (f)		
<b>TOTAL 4</b>	<b>TOTAL 7</b>		<b>TOTAL 38 (2 female)</b>		<b>TOTAL 1</b>	<b>TOTAL 2</b>
<b><u>GRAND TOTAL 52</u></b>					<b><u>LODGERS 8</u></b>	

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES</u>			<u>RAILWAYMEN</u>		<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES		ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	IRELAND	
<b>1891</b>						
Surfaceman	2 Surfacemen	Eddleston	Engine Cleaner	Lanarkshire		Crossing Keeper (f)
Porter	Surfaceman	Lyne	Engine Cleaner	Galashiels		
Railway Clerk	Goods Clerk	Broughton	Engine Cleaner	Hawick		
Telegraph Clerk	Porter	Newlands	Engine Driver	Midlothian		
Platelayer	Porter	Traquair	Engine Driver	Fife		
Labourer	Porter	Lyne	Engine Fireman	Lanarkshire		
	Signalman	Manor	Engine Fireman	Linlithgowshire (L)		
	Platelayer	Stobo	Pointsman	Dumfriesshire		
	Platelayer	West Linton	2 Surfacemen	Midlothian		
	Railway Carter	Newlands	2 Surfacemen	Perthshire		
			Surfaceman	Lanarkshire		
			Surfaceman	Invernesshire		
			Surfaceman	Perthshire		
			Platelayer	Lanarkshire		
			Platelayer	Midlothian		
			Platelayer	Edinburghx		
			Guard	Lanarkshire		
			Guard	Dumfriesshire		
			Guard	Midlothian (L)		
			Guard	Renfrewshire		
			Goods Guard	Edinburgh		
			Station Master	Wigtownshire		
			Station Agent	Glasgow		
			Porter	Kircudbrightshire		
			Porter	Aberdeenshire		
			Labourer	Midlothian (L)		
			Inspector	Melrose		
			Wagon Inspector	Lanarkshire		
			Carriage Inspector	Midlothian		
			Goods Clerk	Dumfriesshire (L)		
			Clerk	Lanarkshire (L)		
			Clerk	Roxburghshire (L)		
			Signalman	Renfrewshire		
			Signalman	Dumfriesshire		
<b>TOTAL 6</b>	<b>TOTAL 11</b>		<b>TOTAL 36</b>	<b>TOTAL 0</b>	<b>TOTAL 1</b>	
<b><u>GRAND TOTAL 53</u></b>				<b><u>LODGERS 6</u></b>		

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES</u>	<u>TEXTILE WORKERS</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES	ELSEWHERE
1841		
1 Cotton Manufacturer	7 Cotton Handloom Weavers	Cotton Handloom Weaver England
51 Cotton Handloom Weavers		Cotton Handloom Weaver Foreign
1 Cotton Winder (f)		
1 Wool Manufacturer	2 Wool Stocking Makers	
1 Wool Carder		
5 Wool Handloom Weavers		
12 Wool Stocking Makers (3f)		
1 Linen Handloom Weaver	1 Linen Handloom Weaver	
TOTAL 73 (4 female)	TOTAL 10	TOTAL 2
<u>GRAND TOTAL 85</u>		
	Cotton 62	
	Woollen 21	
	Linen 2	

# Appendix 3 Peebles Census

## PARISH OF PEEBLES

## TEXTILE WORKERS

## BIRTHPLACE

### PEEBLES

### OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES

### ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND

### ENGLAND

### IRELAND

1851

2 Manufacturers (1f)	Manufacturer	Traquair	Cotton Weaver	Lasswade	Wool Stocking
12 Cotton Weavers	Cotton Weaver	Eddleston	Wool Weaver	Melrose (L)	Maker (f)
1 Yarn Winder (f)	Yarn Winder (f)	Eddleston	Wool Weaver	Edinburgh	
9 Wool Weavers	Yarn Spinner	Innerleithen	Wool Stocking Maker	Selkirkshire	
7 Wool Stocking	Wool Weaver	Eddleston	Wool Stocking Maker	Hawick	
Makers (1f 1L)	Wool Stocking Maker (f)				
1 Linen Weaver		West Linton			

TOTAL 32 (3f)

TOTAL 6 (2 female)

TOTAL 5

TOTAL 0

TOTAL 1 (f)

GRAND TOTAL 44 (6f)

LODGERS 2

1861

2 Cotton Weavers	Wool Spinner (f)	Skirling	Cotton Weaver	Edinburgh	2 Wool Weavers	Pirn Winder (f)
1 Wool Spinner	5 Wool Weavers (4f)	Eddleston (1L)	Wool Factory Manager	Galashiels	(2L)	2 Wool Weavers
2 Yarn Winders	Wool Stocking Maker (f)	Stobo	Tweed Warehouse Mgr	Hawick (L)	Wool Warper	(1L)
1 Pirn Winder (f)	Factory Clerk	Eddleston (L)	Wool Spinner	Dumfriesshire		Power Loom
16 Wool Weavers (6f)	Mill Worker	Eddleston	Wool Spinner	Roxburghshire		Weaver (f)
2 Wool Finishers (2f)			Wool Winder	Carnwath		
10 Mill Workers (6f)			2 Wool Winders (2f)	Biggar		
			3 Wool Weavers (2f)	Hawick (2L)		
			Wool Weaver	Fife (L)		
			Wool Weaver	Clackmannan (L)		
			Wool Weaver	Dalkeith		
			Wool Weaver (f)	Melrose (L)		
			Wool Weaver	Lasswade		
			Wool Weaver (f)	Leith (L)		
			Wool Weaver	Jedburgh		
			Wool Weaver (f)	Selkirkshire (L)		
			Wool Weaver	Lanarkshire		
			Wool Weaver	Stirlingshire		
			Wool Stocking Maker	Selkirkshire		
			Wool Stocking Maker (f)	Lauder		
			Wool Finisher	Selkirk (L)		
			Mill Worker (f)	Edinburgh		
			Mill Worker (f)	Melrose (L)		

TOTAL 34 (15f)

TOTAL 9 (6female)

TOTAL 26 (10 female)

TOTAL 3

TOTAL 4 (2f)

GRAND TOTAL 76

LODGERS 15

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES</u>			<u>MALE WOOL WORKERS</u>		<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES		ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND		ENGLAND	IRELAND
1871						
2 Mill Owners	Scourer	Traquair	Mill Owner	Perthshire	Mill Manager	Mill Worker
5 Wool Weavers	Carder	Innerleithen	Tweed Mill Manager	Forfar	Wool Winder	
1 Mill Fireman	Yarn Spinner	Innerleithen	Tweed Designer	Earlston (L)	2 Power Loom	
7 Mill Workers	Wool Weaver	Eddleston	Wool Sorter	Edinburgh	Weavers	
	2 Mill Workers	Newlands	Wool Sorter	Fife	Tweed Filler	
	Mill Worker	Traquair	Wool Sorter	Biggar	2 Mill Workers	
	Mill Clerk	Eddleston (L)	Tweed Piecer	Hawick		
			2 Wool Spinners	Edinburgh		
			Wool Spinner	Selkirk		
			2 Mule Splicers	Midlothian		
			Wool Dyer	Selkirk		
			Wool Dyer	Fife		
			Wool Dyer	Lanarkshire		
			Power Loom Tuner	Langholm (L)		
			Power Loom Tuner	Glasgow (L)		
			Power Loom Tuner	Stirlingshire		
			Warper	Lanarkshire		
			Warper	Hawick		
			Wool Weaver	Glasgow		
			Wool Weaver	Ayrshire (L)		
			2 Fullers	Hawick		
			Fuller	Roxburgh (L)		
			Tweed Finisher	Hawick (L)		
			Mill Worker	Penicuik		
			Mill Worker	Hawick		
TOTAL 15			TOTAL 26		TOTAL 7	TOTAL 1
			<u>GRAND TOTAL 57</u>		<u>LODGERS 7</u>	

Note:- There were still two Cotton Weavers, aged 68 and 76 in Peebles.



PARISH OF PEEBLESFEMALE WOOL WORKERSBIRTHPLACE

PEEBLES

OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES

ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND

ENGLAND

IRELAND

1871

2 Wool Winders	Yarn Spinner	Eddleston	Yarn Spinner	Edinburgh (L)	Wool Winder	Pirn Winder
18 Wool Weavers	Yarn Spinner	Newlands	Wool Winder	Isle of Skye		2 Wool Weavers
2 PowerLoom Weavers	Wool Winder	Eddleston	Wool Winder	Dalkeith		Mill Worker
Darner	2 WoolWeavers	Eddleston	Wool Winder	Forfar		
Finisher	Wool Weaver	Temple Bar	Wool Winder	Roxburghshire		
31 Mill Workers (3L)	Wool Weaver	Glenholm	Twiner	Biggar		
	Darner	Eddleston	Warper	Hawick		
	2 Mill Workers	Manor	Web Knotter	Edinburgh		
	Mill Worker	Traquair	4 Wool Weavers	Lanarkshire		
	Mill Worker	Glenholm	3 Wool Weavers	Edinburgh (3L)		
	Mill Worker	Kirkburn	Wool Weaver	Hamilton (L)		
	Mill Worker	Eddleston	Wool Weaver	Symington		
			Wool Weaver	Newton Stewart		
			Wool Weaver	Biggar		
			Wool Weaver	Ayrshire		
			Wool Weaver	Midcalder		
			Power Loom Weaver	Dalkeith		
			Darner	Hawick		
			2 MillWorkers	Roxburghshire		
			Mill Worker	Lasswade		
			MillWorker	Dumfries (L)		
			Mill Worker	Edinburgh		
			Mill Worker	Ayrshire		
			Mill Worker	Galashiels		
			Mill Worker	Lanarkshire		

TOTAL 55

TOTAL 14

TOTAL 31

TOTAL 1

TOTAL 4

GRAND TOTAL 105LODGERS 9

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES 1881:</u>		<u>MALE WOOL WORKERS</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES	ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	IRELAND
1881				
2 Mill Owners	Carder	Stobo	Warper	Warper
Carder	Scourer	Manor	Pattern Weaver	Mill Worker
Teaser	Power Loom Tuner	Eddleston	Weaver	
Twiner	Warper	Walkerburn	2 Mill Workers	
Wool Spinner	Power Loom Weaver		(1L)	Weaver
Wool Dyer		Innerleithen		(St Helena)
Power Loom Tuner	2 Warehousemen	Stobo		
2 Warpers	Warehouseman	Temple		
2 Web Drawers	Mill Worker	West Linton		
Wool Weaver	Mill Worker	Newlands		
Mill Fitter	Mill Worker	Tweedsmuir		
3 Warehousemen	Mill Worker	Eddleston		
Labourer (L)	Mill Worker	Walkerburn		
Mill Worker	5 Mill Workers	Innerleithen		
	Mill Clerk	Walkerburn		
	Message Boy	Walkerburn		
SEE NEXT PAGE				
TOTAL 30		TOTAL 108	TOTAL 5	TOTAL 3
TOTAL 20				
<u>GRAND TOTAL 166</u>			<u>LODGERS 19</u>	

PARISH OF PEEBLESMALE WOOL WORKERSBIRTHPLACE

## ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND

1881

Mill Owner	Forfarshire	Power Loom Tuner	Jedburgh (L)	2 Finishers	Penicuik
Mill Owner	Ayrshire	Power Loom Tuner	Langholm	Finisher	Dumfriesshire
Mill Manager	Dumfriesshire	Power Loom Tuner	Earlston	Finisher	Galashiels
Mill Manager	Aberdeenshire	Power Loom Tuner	Hawick	Finisher	Hawick (L)
Mill Manager	Clackmannan (L)	Power Loom Tuner	Clackmannan	Finisher	East Lothian
Mill Foreman	Tillicoultry	Web Drawer	Galashiels	Warehouse	Tranent
Tweed Merchant	Forfarshire	Warper	Duns	Warehouseman	Dumfriesshire
Tweed Design	Renfrewshire	Warper	Clackmannan	Warehouseman	Hawick
Tweed Designer	Selkirkshire	Warper	Fife	Warehouseman	Midlothian
2 Wool Sorters	Hawick (2L)	Warper	Tillicoultry	Warehouseman	Berwickshire
Wool Sorter	Lauder	Warper	Hawick (L)	Warehouseman	Glasgow
Carder	Dunblane	Warper	Lanarkshire	4 Mill Workers	Hawick
Piecer	Lanarkshire	Warper	Edinburgh	Mill Workers	Ayrshire
2 Wool Spinners	Edinburgh	Warper	Galashiels	2 Mill Workers	Edinburgh
Wool Spinner	Lanarkshire	Pattern Weaver	Clackmannan	2 Mill Workers	Perthshire (1L)
Wool Spinner	Midlothian	Pattern Weaver	Stirlingshire	Mill Worker	Midlothian (L)
Wool Spinner	Galashiels	Pattern Weaver	Tillicoultry	Mill Worker	Biggar
Wool Spinne	Selkirk (L)	2 Weavers	Alloa	Mill Worker	Galashiels (L)
Wool Spinner	Stirlingshire	2 Weavers	Tillicoultry	Mill Worker	Dumfriesshire
Twiner	Midlothian	3 Weavers	Stirlingshire	Mill Worker	Lanarkshire
Yarn Scourer	Kinrossshire	Weaver	Clackmannan	Mill Worker	Langholm
Dyer	Lanarkshire	Weaver	Kinrossshire	Mill Worker	Aberdeen (L)
Dyer	Selkirkshire	Weaver	Glasgow	Mill Worker	Banffshire (L)
Dyer	Ayrshire	Weaver	Perthshire	Mill Worker	East Lothian
Yarn Bundler	Hawick (L)	Weaver	Kincardineshire	Mill Fitter	Galashiels
Yarn Storeman	Aberdeenshire	Weaver	Rosshire	Mill Fitter	Hawick (L)
Yarn Storeman	Dumfriesshire	Weaver	Renfrewshire	Mill Engineman	East Lothian
Yarn Storeman	Aberdeen (L)	Weaver	Galashiels (L)	Mill Engineer	Clackmannan
Power Loom Tuner	Ancrum	Pressman	Galashiels	Mill Fireman	Fife
Power Loom Tuner	Galashiels	Mill Clerk	Stirlingshire		
Power Loom Tuner	Aberdeen (L)	Mill Clerk	Leith		
Power Loom Tuner	Selkirkshire	Mill Clerk	Renfrewshire		

TOTAL 108LODGERS 17

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES</u>			<u>FEMALE WOOL WORKERS</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES	ELSEWHERE SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	IRELAND
1881				
9 Wool Winders Designer 3 Power Loom Weavers 23 Wool Weavers (2L) 8 Darners 2 Pickers 4 Finishers Waste Sorter 32 Mill Workers (2L)	Wool Winder Wool Winder Power Loom Weaver Power Loom Weaver 4 Wool Weavers 4 Wool Weavers 3 Wool Weavers 2 Wool Weavers 2 Wool Weavers Wool Weaver Wool Weaver Wool Weaver Darner Darner Darner Picker Picker Wool Birler 4 Mill Workers 2 Mill Workers 2 Mill Workers Mill Worker Mill Worker Mill Worker Mill Worker Mill Worker Mill Worker	Traquair Innerleithen Innerleithen Newlands Manor Innerleithen Traquair 2L) Walkerburn Eddleston Temple Lyne (L) Kirkburn Stobo Eddleston Innerleithen West Linton Innerleithen Eddleston (L) Innerleithen Newlands Manor Temple Stobo Drumelzier Traquair Tweedsmuir Lyne	SEE NEXT PAGE	2 Wool Winders (1L) Darner 2 Mill Workers   <

PARISH OF PEEBLESFEMALE WOOL WORKERSBIRTHPLACEELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND**1881**

Piecer	Hawick	Weaver	Forfarshire	2 Birlers	East Lothian
Piecer	Galashiels	Weaver	Dalkeith	2 Birlers	Lanarkshire
Piecer	Midlothian	Weaver	Tilllicoultry (L)	4 Mill Workers	Perthshire (1L)
Wool Spinner	Hawick	Weaver	Glasgow	3 Mill Workers	Edinburgh
3 Wool Winders	Lanarkshire	Weaver	Aberdeenshire	3 Mill Workers	Dalkeith
2 Wool Winders	Perthshire	Weaver	Rossshire	2 Mill Workers	Glasgow (1L)
2 Wool Winders	Glasgow	Weaver	Roxburghshire	2 Mill Workers	Tilllicoultry
2 Wool Winders	Galashiels (L)	Weaver	Clackmannan	2 Mill Workers	Leith
2 Wool Winders	East Lothian	Weaver	Jedburgh (L)	2 Mill Workers	Ayrshire
2 Wool Winders	Midlothian	Weaver	Ayrshire	Mill Worker	Stirlingshire
2 Wool Winders	Clackmannan	Weaver	Langholm (L)	Mill Worker	Invernesshire
2 Wool Winders	Stirlingshire	Weaver	Alloa	Mill Worker	Selkirkshire
Wool Winder	Leith	Weaver	Selkirkshire	Mill Worker	Aberdeenshire
Wool Winder	Ayrshire (L)	Weaver	Midlothian	Mill Worker	Penicuik (L)
Wool Winder	Forfarshire	Weaver	Kelso (L)	Mill Worker	Hawick (L)
Wool Winder	Edinburgh	Darner	Midlothian	Mill Worker	Rossshire
Power Loom Weaver	Penicuik (L)	Darner	Alloa	Mill Worker	Melrose (L)
Power Loom Weaver	Stirling (L)	Darner	Selkirkshire	Mill Worker	Jedburgh
Power Loom Weaver	Renfrew	Darner	Perthshire	Mill Worker	Midlothian
Power Loom Weaver	Musselburgh	Darner	Midlothian	Mill Worker	Lanarkshire
7 Weavers	Lanarkshire (1L)	Darner	Leith	Mill Worker	Lauder
2 Weavers	Galashiels	Darner	Penicuik	Mill Worker	Brechin (L)
2 Weavers	Lasswade	Darner	East Lothian	Mill Worker	Dumfriesshire (L)
2 Weavers	Renfrewshire	Darner	Edinburgh (L)		
2 Weavers	Midlothian	Darner	Midlothian		
2 Weavers	Dumfriesshire	2 Pickers	Lanarkshire		
2 Weavers	Edinburgh (1L)	2 Pickers			

**TOTAL 112****LODGERS 18**

**LODGERS 34**

PARISH OF PEEBLESMALE WOOL WORKERSBIRTHPLACE

## ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND

1891

2 Mill Owners	Galashiels	3 Dyer's Labourers	East Lothian	Picker	Hawick
Mill Owner	Kirkcudbrightshire	Dyer's Labourers	Hawick	Picker	Stirlingshire
Mill Owner	Perthshire	Dyer's Labourers	Lanarkshire	2 Finishers	Galashiels
Mill Manager	Ayrshire	Dyer's Labourers	Dumfriesshire	Finisher	Renfrewshire
Mill Manager	Banff	2 Power Loom Tuners	Roxburghshire (1L)	2 Mill Clerks	
Mill Foreman	Clackmannan	Power Loom Tuner	Midlothian (L)		Selkirkshire
Mill Foreman	Lanarkshire	Power Loom Tuner	Fife	Mill Clerk	Fife (1.)
Mill Foreman	Berwickshire	Power Loom Tuner	Galashiels	Mill Clerk	Galashiels
Mill Foreman	Clackmannan	Power Loom Tuner	Dumbartonshire	2 Storemen	Clackmannan
Mill Foreman	Hawick	Power Loom Tuner	Lanarkshire	2 Warehousemen	
Mill Foreman	Edinburgh	Power Loom Tuner	Selkirk		Edinburgh
Mill Foreman	Jedburgh	Power Loom Tuner	Paisley	Warehouseman	
Yarn Foreman	Aberdeen	Power Loom Tuner	Clackmannan		Stirlingshire
Yarn Foreman	Galashiels	Power Loom Tuner	Dumfriesshire	Warehouseman	Selkirk
Tweed Merchant	Fife	Power Loom Tuner	Berwickshire	Warehouseman	Roxburgh
Tweed Merchant	Forfar	Power Loom Tuner	Aberdeen	Warehouseman	Glasgow
Tweed Merchant	Lanarkshire	Warper	Selkirk	Warehouseman	
Tweed Salesman	Jedburgh	Warper	Fife		Berwickshire
Tweed Designer	Dumfriesshire	Warper	Stirlingshire	Warehouseman	
Tweed Designer	Selkirk	Warper	Lanarkshire		Lanarkshire
5 Wool Sorters	Hawick (2L)	Warper	Roxburghshire	Warehouseman	
2 Wool Sorters	Galashiels	Warper	Berwickshire		Midlothian
Wool Sorter	Roxburghshire (L)	6 Pattern Weavers	Clackmannan (1L)	7 Mill Workers	
Wool Sorter	Berwickshire	3 Pattern Weavers	Renfrewshire	5 Mill Workers	Edinburgh
Scourer	Edinburgh	Pattern Weaver	Dumfriesshire	3 Mill Workers	
Scourer	East Lothian	Pattern Weaver	Selkirk		Roxburghshire (1L)
2 Carders	Galashiels	Pattern Weaver	Kinrossshire	3 Mill Workers	Selkirk (3L)
Carder	Hawick (L)	Pattern Weaver	Stirlingshire	3 Mill Workers	Dumfriesshire
		Pattern Weaver	Jedburgh	3 Mill Workers	Clackmannan
Carder	Edinburgh	5 Weavers	Clackmannan	3 Mill Workers	Galashiels (1L)
		4 Weavers	Glasgow (1L)	2 Mill Workers	
Carder	Clackmannan	3 Weavers	Renfrewshire		Berwickshire (1L)
Carder	Morayshire	2 Weavers	Stirlingshire	2 Mill Workers	Lanarkshire
Piecer	Hawick	2 Weavers	Berwickshire	2 Mill Workers	Leith (1L)
Piecer	Edinburgh	2 Weavers	Lanarkshire	2 Mill Workers	Stirlingshire
Piecer	Midlothian	Weaver	Galashiels	Mill Worker	Langholm
2 Spinners	Edinburgh	Weaver	Fife	Mill Worker	Jedburgh
2 Spinners	Galashiels	Weaver	Kinrossshire	Mill Worker	Renfrewshire
Spinner	Langholm	Weaver	Dumfriesshire	Mill Worker	Wigtownshire
Spinner	Hawick	Weaver	Kincairdineshire	Mill Worker	Hawick (L)
Spinner	Berwickshire	Weaver	Aberdeenshire	Mill Worker	Perthshire (L)
Spinners	Midlothian	Weaver	Rosshire	Mill Worker	East Lothian
Stocking Knitter	Hawick (L)	Weaver	Roxburghshire	Mill Workers	Fife
Dyer	Aberdeen (L)	Weaver	Aberdeenshire	Mill Worker	Ayrshire
Dyer	Midlothian	Weaver	Rosshire	Boilerhouseman	Midlothian
Dyer	Lanarkshire	Weaver	Roxburghshire	Boilerhouseman	Stirlingshire
Pressman	Clackmannan (L)	Weaver		Boilerhouseman	Lanarkshire
Pressman	Galashiels			Timekeeper	Fife

TOTAL 188

<u>PARISH OF PEEBLES</u>		<u>FEMALE WOOL WORKERS</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
PEEBLES	OTHER PEEBLES PARISHES	ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	IRELAND
1891				
Carder	Spinner	Eddleston	Piecer	Carder
4 Piecers	Spinner	Tweedsmuir	2 Winders	2 Winders
Spinner	5 Winders	Innerleithen	Darner (L)	2 Pickers
13 Winders	2 Winders	Newlands	Birler	3 Birlers
5 PatternWeavers	Winder	Eddleston		4 Mill Workers
33 Weavers	Winder	Manor		
9 Darners	Winder	West Linton		
7 Pickers	5 Weavers	Innerleithen		
3 Birlers (1L)	2 Weavers	Stobo		
4 Finishers	2 Weavers	Traquair		
Storewoman	Weaver	Manor		
43 Mill Workers (1L)	Weaver	Walkerburn		
	2 Darners	Traquair		
	Darner	Broughton		
	Darner	Innerleithen		
	Darner	Tweedsmuir		
	Darner	Walkerburn		
	Darner	Eddleston		
	Picker	Traquair		
	Picker	Manor		
	Birler	Eddleston		
	2 Finishers	Innerleithen		
	Finisher	West Linton		
	Finisher	Stobo		
	4 Mill Workers	Innerleithen		
	2 Mill Workers	Eddleston (1L)		
	Mill Worker	Stobo		
	Mill Worker	Drumelzier		
	Mill Worker	Newlands		
	Office Cleaner	Newlands		
TOTAL 124	TOTAL 47	TOTAL 228	TOTAL 5	TOTAL 12
<u>GRAND TOTAL 416</u>			<u>LODGERS 31</u>	



PARISH OF PEEBLESFEMALE WOOL WORKERSBIRTHPLACE

## OTHER SCOTTISH LOCATIONS

1891

Carder	Hawick (L)	4 Weavers	Edinburgh	Finisher	Dumbartonshire
Carder	Morayshire	3 Weavers	Leith (2L)	Finisher	Selkirk (L)
Carder	Clackmannan	3 Weavers	Selkirk (L)	13 Mill Workers	Midlothian (2L)
2 Piecers	Galashiels	3 Weavers	Hawick (L)	9 Mill Workers	Lanarkshire
Piecer	Hawick	2 Weavers	Melrose	4 Mill Workers	Edinburgh
Piecer	Lanark	2 Weavers	Ayrshire (L)	4 Mill Workers	Dumfriesshire (L)
Spinner	Lanark	2 Weavers	Galashiels	2 Mill Workers	Selkirk (L)
Spinner	Edinburgh	Weaver	Rossshire	2 Mill Workers	Hawick
6 Winders	Galashiels	Weaver	Invernesshire	2 Mill Workers	Perthshire
5 Winders	Lanarkshire	Weaver	Aberdeenshire (L)	2 Mill Workers	Linlithgowshire
4 Winders	Edinburgh (L)	Weaver	Fife (L)	Mill Worker	Galloway
3 Winders	Midlothian	5 Darners	Dumfriesshire (2L)	Mill Worker	Renfresshire (L)
2 Winders	Hawick	2 Darners	Selkirk (L)	Mill Worker	Stirlingshire
2 Winders	Roxburgh	2 Darners	Galashiels	Mill Worker	East Lothian
2 Winders	Stirlingshire	Darner	Stirlingshire	Mill Worker	Galashiels
Winder	Dumfries	Darner	Lanarkshire	Mill Worker	Forfarshire
Winder	Renfrewshire	Darner	Glasgow	Mill Workers	Caithness
Winder	Aberdeenshire	Darner	Midlothian	Mill Worker	Kirkcudbright (L)
Winder	Leith	Darner	Clackmannan	Cashier/Bookkeeper	
Winder	Clackmannan	3 Pickers	Midlothian	Caithness (L)	
Winder	Ayrshire	3 Pickers	Lanarkshire		
Winder	Perthshire	2 Pickers	East Lothian		
Winder	Selkirk	2 Pickers	Stirlingshire		
Winder	Linlithgowshire	2 Pickers	Fife		
4 Power Loom Weavers	Clackmannan (1L)	Picker	Dumfriesshire		
3 Power Loom Weavers	Renfrewshire	Picker	Selkirk		
3 Power Loom Weavers	Aberdeenshire	Picker	Clackmannan		
Power Loom Weaver	Rossshire	Picker	Ayrshire		
Power Loom Weaver	Midlothian	Picker	Hawick		
Power Loom Weaver	Galashiels (L)	5 Birlers	Midlothian		
Power Loom Weaver	Laugholm	2 Birlers	Selkirk (2L)		
13 Weavers	Lanarkshire (2L)	Birler	Lanarkshire		
11 Weavers	Midlothian	Birler	Melrose		
8 Weavers	Clackmannan (L)	Birler	Edinburgh		
5 Weavers	Glasgow	Birler	Linlithgowshire		
4 Weavers	Dumfriesshire	5 Finishers	Midlothian		
4 Weavers	Berwickshire	Finisher	Lanarkshire		
4 Weavers	Stirlingshire	Finisher	Linlithgowshire		

TOTAL 228LODGERS 27



<u>PARISH OF DUNS</u>		<u>CARRIERS &amp; CARTERS</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
DUNS	OTHER BERWICK PARISHES	ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	IRELAND
<b>1841</b>				
5 Carriers				
TOTAL 5	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 5</u>				
<hr/>				
<b>1851</b>				
4 Carters	4 Carters	2 Carters	East Lothian	
TOTAL 4	TOTAL 4	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 9
<u>GRAND TOTAL 10</u>				
<hr/>				
<b>1861</b>				
2 Carters	2 Carters	Carter	Lanarkshire	
TOTAL 2	TOTAL 2	TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 5</u>				
<hr/>				
<b>1871</b>				
5 Carters	2 Carriers 7 Carter s	Carter Carter Carter	Edinburgh Perth Midlothian	
TOTAL 5	TOTAL 9	TOTAL 3	TOTAL 0	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 17</u>				

<u>PARISH OF DUNS</u>		<u>CARRIERS &amp; CARTERS</u>	<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
DUNS	OTHER BERWICK PARISHES	ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND	ENGLAND	IRELAND

1881

7 Carters                      3 Carters

TOTAL 7                      TOTAL 3                      TOTAL 0                      TOTAL 0                      TOTAL 0

GRAND TOTAL 10

-----

1891

4 Carters                      5 Carters                      Carrier      East Lothian

TOTAL 4                      TOTAL 5                      TOTAL 1                      TOTAL 0                      TOTAL 0

GRAND TOTAL 10

PARISH OF DUNSRAILWAYMENBIRTHPLACE**DUNS****OTHER BERWICK PARISHES ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND****ENGLAND****IRELAND****1851****Station Agent  
Porter  
Labourer****Engineering Inspector  
Guard  
Servant****Engine Driver  
Engine Fireman  
Station Master  
Porter  
Labourer****Dunbar  
Leith  
Edinburgh  
Lanark  
Inverness****Engine Driver****Labourer****TOTAL 3****TOTAL 3****TOTAL 5****TOTAL 1****TOTAL 1****GRAND TOTAL 13****LODGERS 0****1861****Clerk  
Labourer****Engine Cleaner  
Engine Fireman  
2 Porters****Engine Driver  
Guard  
Clerk  
Clerk  
Porter  
Railway Carter****Dunbar  
Edinburgh  
West Lothian  
East Lothian (L)  
Inverness  
Edinburgh****Guard****TOTAL 2****TOTAL 4****TOTAL 6****TOTAL 1****TOTAL 0****GRAND TOTAL 13****LODGERS 1****1871****Clerk****2 Surfacemen  
Platlayer  
Porter (L)****Engine Driver  
Engine Driver  
Engine Driver  
Engine Fireman  
Guard  
Station Master  
Clerk  
Clerk  
Porter  
Porter  
Porter  
Railway Carter****Dunbar  
Edinburgh  
Roxburgh (L)  
Roxburgh (L)  
Hawick  
Perth  
Clackmannan (L)  
Tranent  
Roxburgh  
Fife (L)  
Haddington  
Inverness****Surfaceman  
Platlayer****TOTAL 1****TOTAL 4****TOTAL 12****TOTAL 2****TOTAL 0****GRAND TOTAL 19**

<u>PARISH OF DUNS</u>		<u>RAILWAYMEN</u>		<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
DUNS	OTHER BERWICK PARISHES	ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND		ENGLAND	IRELAND
1881					
Wagon Inspector Clerk Labourer	Engine Fireman (L) Surfaceman Platelayer Porter Telegraph Clerk	Engine Cleaner Engine Driver Engine Driver Engine Driver Surfaceman Surfaceman Guard Station Master Porter Porter Porter Booking Clerk (f)	Edinburgh (L) Dunbar Roxburgh Edinburgh East Lothian Roxburgh Hawick Fife Aberdeen Orkney (L) Midlothian Edinburgh	Engine Fireman Surfaceman Guard Clerk (L)	Porter
TOTAL 3	TOTAL 5	TOTAL 12		TOTAL 4	TOTAL 1
<u>GRAND TOTAL 25</u>				<u>LODGERS 0</u>	
1891					
Engine Cleaner 2 Engine Firemen 3 Surfacemen Guard Porter	Platelayer Porter Goods Clerk	Engine Cleaner Engine Driver Engine Driver Guard Guard Station Master Porter Wagon Inspector Clerk Railway Carter	Edinburgh Kelso Edinburgh Bathgate East Lothian Fife Aberdeen East Lothian Roxburgh (L) Skye	Engine Fireman Surfaceman Inspector	
TOTAL 8	TOTAL 4	TOTAL 10		TOTAL 3	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 24</u>				<u>LODGERS 1</u>	

PARISH OF DUNSTEXTILE WORKERSBIRTHPLACE

DUNS

OTHER BERWICK PARISHES

ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND

ENGLAND

IRELAND

**1841**3 Cotton Handloom  
Weavers

2 Stocking Makers

Dyer

Linen Weaver

Wool Manufacturer  
Wool Spinner  
3 Wool WeaversLinen Weaver  
Flax DresserHandloom Weaver  
(Unspecified)Linen Manufacturer  
16 Linen Weavers

19 Handloom Weavers

TOTAL 44

TOTAL 0

TOTAL 5

TOTAL 1

TOTAL 1

\*The Enumerator for  
District 4 failed to  
differentiate between  
types of cloth.GRAND TOTAL 51LODGERS 0**1851**\*\*Wool Manufacturer  
Wool Spinner  
3 Wool Weavers  
4 Handloom Weavers4 Wool Weavers (11)  
2 Stocking Knitters (2)  
Mill Worker

Wool Handloom Weaver Edinburgh

Wool  
Manufacturer

2 Linen Weavers

Linen Handloom Weaver Dalkeith

TOTAL 11

TOTAL 7 (2 female)

TOTAL 2

TOTAL 1

TOTAL 0

\*\*Henry Darling of  
Cumledge Waulk Mill,  
employing 7 men.GRAND TOTAL 21LODGERS 1

<u>PARISH OF DUNS</u>		<u>TEXTILE WORKERS</u>		<u>BIRTHPLACE</u>	
DUNS	OTHER BERWICK PARISHES	ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND		ENGLAND	IRELAND
1861					
Wool Weaver Stocking Knitter (f)	4 Wool Weavers (2f) Stocking Knitter (f) 4 Mill Workers (1f)	* Wool Manufacturer Spinner Wool Weaver (f) Wool Weaver Mill Worker Millwright	Hawick Hawick Hawick Roxburgh (L) Hawick Hawick	Wool Weaver	
6 Linen Weavers					
		* William Laidlaw of Cumledge Mill employing 29 workers.			
TOTAL 8 (1f)	TOTAL 9 (4 female)	TOTAL 4 (1 female)		TOTAL 1	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 24</u>				<u>LODGERS 0</u>	

1871

Wool Winder	Wool Warper	(f)	* Wool Manufacturer	Hawick	Wool Spinner (L)
18 Wool Weavers (17f)	Fuller		Wool Spinner	Hawick (L)	Mule Fitter (L)
2 Stocking Knitters	Mill Worker		Wool Winder	Kelso	Wool Weaver (f)
(2f)	Mill Clerk	(L)	Power Loom Weaver	Roxburgh	Engine Fitter (L)
Mill Worker			Mill Worker	Melrose	
			Millwright	Roxburgh	
2 Linen Weavers			Engineman	Melrose (L)	
			Engineman	St Boswells (L)	
			Mill Carter	Ayrshire	

\* William Laidlaw of Cumledge  
Mill employing 27 males and  
45 females.

TOTAL 24 (19f)	TOTAL 4 (1f)	TOTAL 9	TOTAL 9	TOTAL 0
<u>GRAND TOTAL 41</u>			<u>LODGERS 6</u>	



# Appendix 4 Duns Census

## PARISH OF DUNS

## TEXTILE WORKERS

## BIRTHPLACE

DUNS

OTHER BERWICK PARISHES

ELSEWHERE IN SCOTLAND

ENGLAND

IRELAND

**1881**

Wool Manufacturer  
2 Wool Weavers (2f)  
Power Loom Mgr  
18 Mill Workers  
(8f 1L)  
Engineman (L)

Piecer  
8 Wool Weavers (f)  
Picker  
Finisher  
2 Mill Workers (2f)

\* Wool Manufacturer Hawick  
Wool Spinner Roxburgh  
Engineer Roxburgh

Wool Spinner  
5 Wool Weavers  
(4female)

\* William Laidlaw of Cumledge  
Mill now employed 14 men,  
42 women, 14 boys and 3 girls.  
Most of his workers must have  
come from outside Duns Parish.

TOTAL 23 (10f)

TOTAL 13 (3 female)

TOTAL 3

TOTAL 6 (5f)

TOTAL 0

GRAND TOTAL 45

LODGERS 2

**1891**

Piecer  
14 Wool Weavers (14f)  
Power Loom Tuner  
Picker (f)  
11 Mill Workers (5f)  
Warehouseman

2 Wool Sorters  
Scurer  
3 Piecers (3f)  
Teaser (f)  
Warper (f)  
7 Wool Weavers (7f)  
Picker  
Finisher  
12 Mill Workers (7f)  
Warehouseman (L)

\*Wool Manufacturer Hawick  
Carder Selkirk (L)  
Piecer Edinburgh  
Piecer Selkirk  
Power Loom Tuner Hawick  
Wool Weaver Midlothian (f)  
Wool Weaver Fife  
Wool Weaver Fife (f)  
Wool Weaver Galashiels (f)  
Finisher Galashiels  
2 Mill Workers Roxburgh

Wool Spinner  
Wool Warper (f)  
4 Wool Weavers  
(4f)

Wool Weaver (f)

\* No employee statistics given for  
William Laidlaw.

TOTAL 29 (20f)

TOTAL 30 (19 female)

TOTAL 12 (3 female)

TOTAL 6 (5f)

TOTAL 1

GRAND TOTAL 78

LODGERS 2



## PARLIAMENTARY STANDING ORDERS FOR RAILWAY BILLS

**“The standing orders, which were designed to protect the property interests affected by the proposed railway, facilitated opposition to railway bills on even the minutest grounds, and put the onus on proving compliance with standing orders upon the promoters rather than upon the party bringing a complaint of non-compliance.”<sup>1</sup>**

In 1852, when John Bathgate was preparing the submission to Parliament for a Private Act to allow the construction of the Peebles Railway, both Houses of Parliament had similar sets of Standing Orders in place, as all Private Bills were scrutinised by both Houses. Railway Bills had to be submitted by November 30th for consideration by Parliament in the following Session. The Standing Orders 15 to 60 paraphrased below were the principal ones relevant to the Peebles Railway Bill, and are taken from the complete list that appears in “Accounts & Papers 15, House of Commons 1852 XLII.” There were Officers of the House, called the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, who were appointed by the Speaker. Their function was to ensure that Bills complied with Standing Orders. A Railway Bill was then dealt with by a Committee appointed by the House, consisting of a Chairman and four members “not locally or otherwise interested in the Bill.”

Altogether there were 204 Standing Orders which dealt with the processing of private bills.

Orders 1 to 9	Procedural matters, such as the appointment of Committees.
10 to 14	Proofs of compliance with Standing Orders to the Examiner of Petitions.
15 to 60	Detailed the procedures to be followed by Bill Petitioners.
61 to 120	Proceedings of the Examiners of Petitions and Chairmen of Committees.
121 to 137	Proceedings of Committees on Railway Bills.
138 to 149	Proceedings of Committees on other categories of Private Bill.
150 to 179	Practice of the House with regard to Private Bills.
180 to 204	Regulations regarding the operation of the Private Bill Office.

<sup>1</sup> Irving, R.J., *The capitalisation of Britain's railways* (JTH, Railways Vol. 1, 1996) p.90.

The first 14 Orders were procedural matters, dealing with the appointment of committees and the Examiners of Petitions together with details of the two classes of Private Bills. Railway Bills fell into the second class, along with canals, docks, piers, bridges, turnpikes, reservoirs etc.

**Order 15** An advertisement giving notice of the intention to apply to Parliament for permission to build a railway to be published once in the *Edinburgh Gazette* and three consecutive weeks in the town or county newspaper and the paper relevant to the adjacent county. The adverts to appear in October or before the end of November. (See Chapter 4, Fig.4-2)

**Order 16** Notice in writing to be given to Owners, Lessees and Occupiers of the land required.

**Order 17** This notice to be sent by registered letter, and posted on or before December 15th.

**Order 18** Written acknowledgement or a post office receipt would be sufficient evidence that Orders 16 and 17 had been complied with.

**Order 19** Separate lists of Owners, Lessees and Occupiers to be prepared, stating whether they Assented, Dissented or were Neuter, together with a list of those who had not returned an answer.

Orders 20 and 21 were not applicable to Railway Bills.

**Order 22** Notice to be given to Owners of land if the Bill was to relinquish a railway that had been previously authorised.

**Order 23** The Private Bills Office would only accept valid delivery of Bills between 8am and 8pm daily, except Sundays and Christmas Day.

**Order 24** Plans and Books of Reference to be deposited with the Principal Sheriff Clerk of each county in Scotland affected by the railway, before November 30th. (See Orders 39 and 43).

**Order 25** Sheriff Clerks to endorse the time and date when the documents required by Order 24 had been deposited with them.

**Order 26** If tidal lands were involved, Plans and Sections had to be submitted to the Admiralty before November 30th.

**Order 27** A published map, not less than half an inch to the mile, showing the general course and direction of the Railway, was to be deposited as in Order 24, together with Plans, Sections and Books of Reference. (See Fig.4-1).

**Order 28** Documents required by Orders 24 to 27 were to be deposited in the Office of the Commissioners of Railways by November 30th.

**Order 29** Documents required by Order 28 to be deposited in the Private Bills Office of the House of Commons, on or before November 30th.

**Order 30** Copies of those parts of the Plans, Sections and Books of Reference relevant to each parish to be given to the Schoolmaster or Session Clerk in a parish, or to the Town Clerk in a Royal Burgh.

**Order 31** When Plans, Sections or Books of Reference require to be deposited, they should also include a copy of the Gazette notice of Order 15.

**Order 32** Every petition for a Railway Bill should be headed by “a short Title, descriptive of the undertaking” and which corresponded to the Gazette notice. Printed Copies of this petition to be deposited in the Private Bill Office for the use of MPs or any interested Agent by December 31st. A Declaration signed by the Agent was also required.

**Order 33** The above Declaration was required to state which of the two classes of Private Bill was involved, and what powers are to be granted in the Bill.:-

- a. Compulsory purchase of lands or houses
- b. To levy tolls, rates or duties
- c. To amalgamate with any other company, or to sell or lease the undertaking.
- d. To relinquish any part of the work previously authorised.
- e. To make, vary, extend or enlarge any railway.

**Order 34** Cost Estimates, copies of Share Subscription Contracts, Declarations, and the lists required under Order 19 to be sent to the Private Bill Office by December 31st.

**Order 35** Bills for the incorporation of Joint Stock Companies to be submitted to the Private Bill Office by December 31st., to include:-

- a. Present and proposed Capital of the company
- b. The number of shares and their par value
- c. The number of shares already subscribed for
- d. The amount of subscriptions paid up
- e. The names, residences and descriptions of the subscribers "as far as can be made out", together with the names of the actual or provisional Directors, Treasurer, Secretary, or other officials, if any. Documents a. to e. above to be verified by an authorised signatory.

**Order 36** Copies of the Cost Estimates and the Subscription Contracts with the names of Subscribers in alphabetical order and the amounts they had already paid and the remaining balances, to be delivered to the Vote Office for the use of MPs and to the Private Bill Office for and Agent who may apply for the same, by December 31st..

**Order 37** A printed copy of the Railway Bill to be sent to the Office of the Board of Trade by December 31st., with a copy to the Admiralty if it related to a Port, Harbour, Pier or Navigation and to the Home Office if Turnpike roads were affected.

**Order 38** A repeat of Order 23 for the valid delivery of documents under Orders 32 to 37.

**Order 39** Plans, not less than four inches to the mile, to be submitted by December 31st., showing the Line, the Lands through which it will be made, the limits of Deviation with enlarged scale inserts of ¼ inch per 100 feet to show buildings, yards, gardens etc.

**Order 40** Refers to plans for Canals, Water Works, Navigation etc.

**Order 41** The distance in miles and furlongs from one of the railway termini to be shown on the Plan, and the radius of curves not exceeding one mile to be noted in furlongs and chains, with tunnelling shown by a dotted line.

**Order 42** The Plan to be marked with any diversions required of roads, navigable rivers, canals or other railways.

**Order 43** The Book of Reference to list the owners occupiers and lessees of all lands and houses along the line, and within the Limits of Deviation.

Order 44 Sections to be drawn to the same horizontal scale as the Plan, with the vertical scale not less than 1 inch = 100 feet. The height of embankments and the depths of cuttings to be measured against a horizontal Datum Line, at some fixed point near either of the Termini.

Order 45 Deals with river navigation.

Order 46 The line shall correspond to the upper surface of the rails in every Section of the railway.

Order 47 Distances on the Datum Line to be marked in miles and furlongs to correspond with those on the Plan. Vertical measurements from the Datum Line to the line of the railway to be marked in feet and inches, at each change of the gradient or inclination.

Order 48 The height of the railway over, or the depth under the surface of roads, rivers, canals etc., to be marked at every crossing, together with descriptions of bridges and level crossings.

Order 49 Cross sections of canals and roads crossed by the railway required when the rate of inclination is to be altered. Show the present surface of such canal or road and the intended surface when altered—horizontal scale 1 inch = 330 feet and vertical scale 1 inch = 40 feet.

Order 50 When extremes of height of any embankment or extreme depth of any cutting shall exceed 5 feet, these heights or depths to be marked upon the Section. If any bridge or viaduct of more than three arches shall intervene in any embankment, or if any tunnel shall intervene in any cutting, the extreme heights or depths to be marked on the relevant parts of the Section.

Order 51 Any tunnels or viaducts to be marked on the Section,

Order 52 Estimates of expenditure to be made and signed by the Engineer, and that subscriptions be entered into under contract for three-fourths the amount of such estimate. These to be deposited as for Order 34.

Order 53 Subscription contracts to contain Christian names and surname, description and place of abode, signature, the amount of subscription with the amount already paid, the name of the witness to the signature and the date, and the legal description of any corporate body party to the contract. Finally, the total amount of such subscriptions and the sums paid up to be furnished.

Order 54 Deals with Class 2 Bills other than Railway Bills.

Order 55 No subscription contract to be valid “unless it be entered into subsequent to the commencement of the Session of Parliament previous to that in which application is made for leave to bring in the Bill to which it relates, and unless the Parties subscribing to it bind themselves, their Heirs, Executors and Administrators for payment of the Money so subscribed, to be recoverable by action at law.”<sup>2</sup>

Order 56 Deals with subscription contracts of an existing railway company wishing to raise additional capital for the purposes of constructing branches, extensions or other new works. Contracts to be entered into for three-fourths of the additional capital and deposits duly paid (see Order 60).

Order 57 A Declaration may be made in lieu of a subscription contract, if the extension is to be made out of existing funds or out of money raised upon the credit of present surplus revenue. Such a Declaration should be given under the common seal of the Company, or signed by an authorised Officer.

Order 58 Deals with works to be made out of money to be raised on the security of the Rates, Duties or Revenues.

Order 59 Deals with the deposit of money for non-railway bills.

Order 60 “In the case of Railway Bills, a sum not less in amount than One-tenth part of three-fourths of the estimate shall, previous to the 15th day of January, be deposited with...the Court of Exchequer in Scotland, if such railway is intended to be made in Scotland.”

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<sup>2</sup> This Order was made to avoid problems with defaulting share subscribers. For example, in the case of the South Eastern Railway in 1838, “of the original 28,000 shares, there were problems with at least 10,000.” Gray, A., *The South Eastern Railway* (Midhurst, 1990) p.13. In such cases, rather than going to law, the Maryport & Carlisle and the Peebles Railway usually declared the shares to be forfeit.



## ALLOCATION OF PEEBLES RAILWAY SHARES

### Introduction

Before a Victorian railway company obtained its Act of Parliament, its shares were in an embryo state known as 'scrip'. They were allocated at the discretion of the Provisional Directors to the various applicants, who then paid a small instalment on each share received. These preliminary sums were paid into a specified bank, the receipt for which was in the form of scrip certificates that were negotiable and could be traded like ordinary shares. Once the Act was passed, current holders of the scrip were required to present their names, addresses, and the number of shares held, for registration at the office of the company secretary. 'Calls' were then made on the shareholders. "If the shares be £10, a call of £2 10s. per share, at intervals of three months till the whole is paid, is customary."<sup>1</sup> Once all the calls had been paid the share certificates were issued; but any failure to pay a call by the prescribed date incurred the risk of forfeiture.

Because Parliament wished to ensure that any proposal to build a railway had genuine local support, we saw in Appendix 5, Order 35 that the names, residences and descriptions of all the original subscribers—"as far as can be made out"—had to be included in an application for a Railway Act. But, the Order did not specify the required minimum percentage of shares to be subscribed for locally, although the one-fifth noted in the withdrawn Edinburgh & Peebles Railway Bill of 1845 (Chapter 3, p.56) would probably have been insufficient.

Very few of the early railways were able to find enough subscribers in their own area to place all the available shares. For example, "the pioneering Stockton & Darlington Railway raised only half of its capital in Durham and North Yorkshire;" significant blocks of the shares were held in East Anglia, the West Midlands and Southwest England. "In 1860 more than 40 per cent of the South Eastern Railway's shareholders lived in Lancashire and Cheshire, compared with

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<sup>1</sup> W. Chambers, *About Railways* (Edinburgh, 1866) p.15.

around a quarter in London, Kent, and Sussex,”<sup>2</sup> although we are not told whether this ‘quarter’ held only a quarter of the shares. In the absence of hard information, it seems reasonable to assume that the acceptable minimum level of local support required by Parliament was about 50 per cent of the share capital.

### **The Peebles Railway share allocation**

When the Peebles Railway Company (PRC) Bill was put forward in 1852, there were 116 local scripholders out of a total of 134 (Chapter 4, p.57). Since the PRC received its Act in July 1853, the size of the local holding was obviously sufficient to satisfy Parliament. Unfortunately, the Subscription List that should have been retained in the House of Lords Library is missing,<sup>3</sup> and the PRC Board copy is not with the other railway papers in the National Archives of Scotland. There are one or two Peebles Railway documents in the Kew Record Office in London, but the subscription list is not one of them. We must therefore rely on fragmentary information contained in the PRC Minute Books, railway journals and the *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, to establish the balance of shares as between local and non-local investors.

It was important for the PRC Provisional Directors to get their seven thousand £10 shares away to a good start, and, initially, they would not be over-concerned as to where the shares were allocated. The *Peeblesshire Advertiser* of 5 October 1852 said that after a favourable review of the railway’s prospects in *Herapath’s Railway Journal*, “more shares have been applied for than the directors will be able to supply, and have been quoted in London at a 10s. premium. Stock has been sought by far-seeing men in London, Bristol, Dublin, Edinburgh and other places.” The *Railway Times* stated that of the first £19,450 subscribed for, £12,000 or 62 per cent was in the hands of three investors in the south of England. These were James and John Renton of London with £5,000 each, and John Todrell of Tunbridge Wells with £2,000.<sup>4</sup> As a matter of

<sup>2</sup> J. Simmons and G. Biddle, *The Oxford Companion to British Railway History* (Oxford, 1997) p.158.

<sup>3</sup> Communication from Richard Ward, Archivist in the House of Lords Record Office, 6 April 2005.

<sup>4</sup> *Railway Times*, 14/5/1853, p.506.

interest, *Herapath* later reported that the calls were not paid on 500 of these shares, "and the Directors have already declared them forfeited."<sup>5</sup> According to the *Railway Times* of 14 May 1853, the PRC Board had a combined holding of 907 shares.<sup>6</sup>

At the first Annual General Meeting of the Company held on 23 August 1853, the PRC Chairman, Sir Graham Montgomery, summarised the history of how the Peebles Act had been achieved. By September 1852, subscriptions had been entered into for shares worth £54,980 out of the authorised share capital of £70,000. "The amount subscribed for being now more than was necessary to enable the Promoters to proceed to Parliament, notice was given to bring in the Bill."<sup>7</sup> £35,520 (or 65 per cent) of the £54,980 had come from local subscribers, and, even in the unlikely event that all the outstanding shares were to be allocated outside Peeblesshire, 51 per cent would still be in local hands. Much of the credit for this successful outcome was due to the energetic canvassing of Walter Thorburn in and around Peebles.

By the beginning of May 1854, shares to the value of £61,680 had been issued and paid up, while the rest remained unissued. The market for railway shares was temporarily depressed at this time as the average dividends had fallen to 3 per cent. However, "the Directors do not feel warranted in offering any of the reserved stock at less than par, and they deem it advisable rather to exercise the borrowing powers in order to obtain capital to complete the work."<sup>8</sup> They believed that because of the anticipated favourable PRC income to capital ratio, dividends would be higher than the 5 per cent cost of loans from the banks or from debentures (a type of mortgage). It would appear that this decision was the correct one, for the PRC share price recovered later, as can be seen from an advertisement in the *Advertiser* on 16 November 1861.

<sup>5</sup> *Herapath's Railway Journal* (*Herapath*), 28/4/1855 p.429.

<sup>6</sup> Montgomery-200; Hay-100; Nicol-100; Ramsay-100; Cowan-100; Anderson-100; Ballantyne-100; Thorburn-57; Chambers-50.

<sup>7</sup> PRC Minute Book, 23/8/1853 (BR/PBR/1/2).

<sup>8</sup> *Herapath*, op.cit., (ref.5) p.403.

**PEEBLES RAILWAY SHARES.****Wanted**

One hundred or less number of Ordinary Shares at £11 2s. 6d.

Apply J. & J.D. Bathgate, Union Bank of Scotland, Peebles.

There was a final issue of shares in 1857, when the need for more locomotives, rolling stock and additional sidings obliged the Company to go back to Parliament for permission to raise a further £27,000, by means of 5 per cent preference shares and loans (Chapter 4, p.60). There is no record of how these preference shares were allocated.

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## PEEBLES AND THE EXCURSIONISTS

Holiday resorts have been described as “a crucible of conflict between classes and lifestyles, as wealthy and status-conscious visitors and residents competed with plebeian locals and roistering excursionists for access to and enjoyment of amenities.”<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

Less than a month after the Peebles Railway opened on 4 July 1855, the first excursion train brought 500 visitors to Peebles. This number was probably as great as the total number of strangers seen in the town over the course of the previous two years (Chapter 9, p.147). Over the following years, the arrival of large groups of excursionists became a regular feature of the summer months: indeed, so large did these parties become, that they stretched the amenities of the Royal Burgh to the very limit. In this appendix we shall consider the largest excursion party ever recorded, which took place in 1864. It consisted of nearly 1,800 Roman Catholics, who came from parishes in Edinburgh and Dalkeith.

### Background

The 1861 Census gave the total population of Peebles Parish as 2,850, with 2,045 living in the town itself. The influx of woollen mill workers had only just begun, but the activities of Walter Thorburn had seen the creation of a new suburb, Springhill, south of the River Tweed. It was largely occupied by the families of professional gentlemen—and affluent retired annuitants—who had come to live in Peebles because of its scenic setting and tranquil environment. The amenities in the town to cater for excursionists were fairly limited—four licensed hotels, two public houses, and three public toilets. The Chambers Institution, Neidpath Castle, the ancient ruins of the Cross Kirk and a variety of shops, together with riverside walks in beautiful countryside, represented all that Peebles had to offer the average day tripper. The railway station was not staffed to handle large crowds: there were only four porters employed by the Peebles Railway to cover all eight stations,<sup>2</sup> although it is likely that extra labour was employed

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<sup>1</sup> J.K. Walton, *The English seaside resort: a social history, 1750-1914* (Leicester, LUP, 1983) p.2.

<sup>2</sup> P.P. XXXVI 1857 2nd Session, pp.340-1.

during the summer months. The maintenance of law and order for the whole of Peeblesshire was in the hands of a small force consisting of a chief constable, a police sergeant and six constables. Even if all the police were deployed in Peebles for the day, the town would still be faced with the difficulty of “controlling large numbers of working-class visitors with limited legal and policing resources.”<sup>3</sup> Such was the setting into which hundreds of day-trippers were being introduced.

Table 9-1 (p.148) lists some of the excursions that arrived in Peebles from Edinburgh during the summer of 1864. Of these, three were very large, consisting of a thousand or more people. When we turn to the remarkable visit in August, there was a further dimension to be added to Walton’s “crucible of conflict”, and that was the possibility of sectarian clashes between Protestants and Catholics, a common occurrence in Victorian Scotland. Roman Catholics, in numbers almost equal to the town’s population, were about to descend upon the burgh.

#### **Information source on the Roman Catholic visit**

The *Peeblesshire Advertiser* of 23 July 1864 intimated that “On Monday, the 1st of August, Peebles is to be visited by 1500 persons of the Roman Catholic persuasion,” thereby providing early warning to the townspeople. This date must have coincided with a local holiday in Edinburgh. However, it was a normal working day in Peebles, which to some extent reduced the possibility of trouble between the locals and the visitors. The sole source of information on the events of the day was a report in the *Peeblesshire Advertiser* that appeared five days later. Surprisingly, there is no mention of this large party—or its organisers—to be found in the Scottish Catholic Archives in Edinburgh, or in the Catholic newspaper *The Tablet*. The event was not covered in the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, although it reported a Sunday school trip of 300 children to Dalkeith on 29 July, from Tranent Church of Scotland Parish in East Lothian. The Edinburgh-based *The Scotsman* newspaper also ignored the Peebles visit, while carrying

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<sup>3</sup> Walton, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.202.

news of an outing of 1,400 Londoners to Boulogne on Saturday, 30 July.<sup>4</sup> For the essentially middle-class Presbyterian readership of these newspapers, perhaps Roman Catholic excursions, however large, were not thought to be newsworthy.

However, a paragraph in *The Scotsman* of 2 August is of some interest: it was in an account, attributed to the *Dundee Advertiser*, of a visit to Baxter Park in Dundee on 30 July. This report contained the comment that “we have been informed by one well able to judge, that of all who have visited the Park, those who have come from Edinburgh have conducted themselves worst.” Peebles, too, had suffered during the visit of a large party from Edinburgh in 1861.<sup>5</sup> As this party was only half as big as the Catholic excursion promised to be, the omens did not look promising for a peaceful day. No doubt the gentlefolk of Springhill decided that they had better arrange to stay at home or quit the town during this particular visit.

### Events of the day

Two special trains that in total consisted of forty-six carriages and conveyed 1,760 men, women and children—rather more than the 1,500 originally forecast—departed for Peebles about half an hour after the first scheduled service of the day left Edinburgh at 9.0am. By August 1864, the Peebles Railway had been leased to the North British Railway (NBR) for over three years, and this was the third large outing to Peebles in just over a month (Table 9-1). Staff in the Edinburgh NBR traffic department were therefore well prepared. They had assembled the necessary carriages—presumably old stock kept for holiday excursions—together with the three locomotives that would have been required to pull each train up the ruling gradient of 1 in 53 between Eskbank and Leadburn. As there were no intermediate stops en route, both trains probably reached Peebles before 11 o’clock. It is not clear whether the engines and coaches

<sup>4</sup> Copies of both newspapers are preserved in the Edinburgh Room, Edinburgh Central Public Library, and a search made through eight issues of each paper—1st to 9th August—failed to find any mention of the Peebles visit.

<sup>5</sup> *Peeblesshire Advertiser*, 6/8/1864. The report of the Catholic excursion compared the crowd behaviour favourably with that of an 1861 visit by the Edinburgh bakers.

were parked in and around Peebles during the day—siding accommodation was limited—or whether they were employed elsewhere until it was time for the party to return to Edinburgh.

Once assembled outside Peebles East station, the party split into groups. The biggest, about a thousand in number, “formed in procession, and, headed by an instrumental band and a flute band, and with some beautiful flags floating in the breeze,” set off for St Joseph’s Church in Rosetta Road, where High Mass was conducted by the Rev. Mr Clapperton. “Only 250 could get into the Chapel,” which, according to the Catholic Directory for 1864, contained seating for 200 people. The rest of the group waited outside until the Mass was over, whereupon the procession re-formed and set off for Neidpath Castle beside the River Tweed, about a mile upstream from the centre of town.

Having arrived there, some of the party “betook themselves to a quiet and pleasant walk along the banks of the classic Tweed, while others contented themselves with ‘tripping lightly o’er the green’ to the inspiring strains of two musicians who accompanied the party. It would be difficult to imagine a more pleasant scene than that witnessed at Neidpath Castle,” enthused the *Advertiser’s* reporter, “where there were upwards of 900 people...every one of whom had cast dull care away,” determined to make the most of a rare day out.

While the rest of the excursionists were exploring the town, “a number of those characters who are to be found in every gathering, and whose sole object is to create disturbances,” settled into the public houses for a day’s drinking. As a result, the Editor of the *Advertiser* witnessed several brawls, but he praised the organising committee “for their energy in quelling the ‘roughs’ who made any disturbance that was.” For the rest of the visitors, “the presence of workmates and neighbours no doubt continued to set limits to most people’s exuberance,”<sup>6</sup> and this restraint was obviously reinforced by the seven priests from parishes in Edinburgh and Dalkeith who

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<sup>6</sup> Walton, *op.cit.*, (ref.1) p.198



accompanied the party.<sup>7</sup> “Considering the excursionists were nearly as numerous as the population of our burgh, we must say that their behaviour was good, and acknowledge that the trouble was confined to a few who never meant otherwise.” Taken as a whole, they were far better behaved than the Edinburgh bakers and their families, whose 1861 visit to Peebles was still vividly remembered.

At about 8pm the visitors to Neidpath Castle once again formed in procession and marched back to the railway station, where they joined the rest of the excursionists. “All were quickly seated in an orderly fashion,” and the first detachment left Peebles at about half-past eight, with the remainder following a few minutes later in the second train. Peace and quiet once again descended upon Peebles, after a day that happily appears to have been marked by tolerance on both sides. What could so easily have been a day of confrontation and conflict between the townsfolk and the visitors had passed off better than anyone might have predicted.

The report in the *Peeblesshire Advertiser* ended with the observation that after all expenses had been paid, the organising committee was left with “a surplus of ten guineas, which was handed over to the Catholic Orphanage in Edinburgh.” The unidentified organisers must have been very satisfied with the success of the day, which owed so much to their efforts in the planning and control of such a large excursion. Although it might be an isolated case, this Peebles visit proved that Walton’s “crucible of conflict” was not an inevitable outcome. There were no reports of arrests, as their own people quickly dealt with the few troublemakers, and the vast majority went home having enjoyed a very pleasant day in the open air, and in beautiful surroundings.

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<sup>7</sup> These were the Revs. Grant, M'Donald, Hennan and Dr M'Curry, together with Jesuit Fathers M'Leod, Docherty and Grant.



## RAILWAY CHRONOLOGY OF SOUTH-EAST SCOTLAND

4 July 1844	North British Railway (NBR) Edinburgh to Berwick upon Tweed authorised.
31 July 1845	Caledonian Railway (CR) Carlisle to Glasgow and Edinburgh authorised.
31 July 1845	NBR Edinburgh & Hawick Railway authorised.
18 June 1846	NBR Edinburgh to Berwick upon Tweed opened.
15 Feb 1848	CR Carlisle to Glasgow and Edinburgh opened.
15 August 1849	NBR Reston to Duns opened.
1 November 1849	NBR Edinburgh to Hawick opened.
29 August 1850	Royal Border Bridge at Tweedmouth opened.
1 June 1851	NBR and North Eastern Railway St Boswells to Tweedmouth via Kelso completed.
13 April 1852	Inaugural Meeting to promote a railway between Peebles and Eskbank.
8 July 1853	Peebles Railway (PR) authorised.
4 July 1855	PR opened.
5 April 1856	Selkirk Railway opened.
17 July 1856	Jedburgh Railway opened.
26 June 1857	PR authorised to raise extra capital by way of preference shares and loans.
21 May 1858	CR-sponsored Symington, Biggar & Broughton Railway authorised.
21 June 1859	NBR Border Union Railway (Waverley Route) Hawick to Carlisle authorised.
5 November 1860	CR Symington to Broughton opened. Bill to extend the line to Peebles.
28 June 1861	NBR Galashiels & Peebles Railway (G&P) authorised.
3 June 1862	Leadburn, Linton & Dolphinton Railway (LL&DR) authorised.
1 July 1862	NBR Border Union and Border Counties Railways opened.
7 July 1862	Berwickshire Railway (BR) authorised.
1 Feb 1864	CR Broughton to Peebles opened.
4 July 1864	LL&DR opened.
1 October 1864	Peebles-Innerleithen section of the G&P opened.
31 July 1865	NBR absorbs the LL&DR.
2 October 1865	BR Duns to St Boswells opened.
18 June 1866	Innerleithen-Galashiels section of the G&P opened.
1 August 1876	NBR absorbs the PR and several small railways in south-east Scotland.